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The Australian WOMEN'S WEEKLY

JANUARY 27, 1954

Vol. 21 No. 35

CHEERS FOR THE QUEEN

ARRANGEMENTS for the Royal visit are nearly complete. Organisers are rechecking the complex detail necessary to produce the tour smoothly.

The officials, the chief actors, are rehearsing their roles. Guests, the minor players, are looking over their wardrobes and their etiquette.

But it is not only invited guests who have a part to play. The audience, the thousands of citizens who will line the routes of the Royal Progresses, can perhaps contribute most of all to the success of the tour.

They, above everyone, can make the Queen feel that she is indeed welcome on this, her first, visit to Australia.

Australians as a rule are not particularly demonstrative people. They turn out in their thousands to watch processions, but the noise they make, in comparison with that of more excitable races, is sometimes disappointingly restrained.

It is said that the Queen likes to hear cheering. That is natural enough. It is the only way she can know the feelings of those who stand to watch her.

There isn't the slightest doubt of the welcome Australians will feel in their hearts.

They can show it, with their voices.

So, when you go out to join the milling crowds along the streets and roads of the Commonwealth to watch the Queen go by, make it a happy, noisy day.

Young or old, don't just stand and stare.

Forget your inhibitions—and cheer.

Our cover:

● Our cover this week shows Her Majesty the Queen being escorted by Mr. R. J. Kerridge at the Command Performance film night at the St. James Theatre in Auckland.

This week:

● This being a souvenir issue to mark the arrival in Australia, within an excitingly brief time, of Her Majesty the Queen, we have devoted a great deal of the paper to Royal topics.

However, all our regular features have been retained—including the full quota of fiction, plus the lift-out novel.

For your guidance, here is a handy index to the Royal souvenir section:

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Next week:

● Next week our free lift-out novel is an unusual murder mystery, "The Fatal Step," by popular U.S. novelist Clarissa Fairchild Cushman. Set in an old country home whose historic feature is a "step" giving secret entrance to a hiding place, the story concerns a group of family and local identities well known to one another. The step, which was originally designed to help runaway slaves, becomes the focal point in a murder investigation. Police officer Cyrus Braddock finds his greatest assistance in sorting out the mass of conflicting evidence comes from Thomas Aquinas, the cat!

Woman's 150-year fight for her emancipation

Book review by
AINSLIE BAKER

IT is no exaggeration to suggest that the average woman of under 50 years of age who reads Vera Brittain's "Lady into Woman" will be astounded.

In this comprehensive and devoted work Miss Brittain surveys the history of women from Victoria to Elizabeth II.

Women's fight for freedom and equality is traced from its beginning more than 150 years ago, when the beautiful Mary Wollstonecraft shocked a complacent England with the publication of her "Vindication of the Rights of Woman," until the present day.

Though drawing most facts from the British movement, the study is sufficiently international in character to show a remarkable consistency in the pattern of women's emancipation throughout the world.

The author's disclosures concerning the completely legally unprotected status of women during what she describes as their "all-time low"—the period from 1800 to 1850—take away the last vestige of the ridiculous from the long-skirted, umbrella-waving militant suffragettes of the early 1900's.

The status of freedom and comparative equality enjoyed by women today makes it difficult to even comprehend the true position of subjection and utter lack of regard in which she was held during the first half of the 19th century.

This was the dark time of middle-class women's imposed unemployment, when their traditional occupations

in the home were taken over by the new factories.

Miss Brittain explains a familiar Victorian tragedy thus: "Deprived of natural outlets for their energies . . . (they) . . . monopolised their husbands, sought to dominate their sons and possess their daughters, made fetishes of their kitchens and gods of their home."

Martin Luther dictum, "If a woman becomes weary and at last dead from bearing, that matters not; let her die only from bearing, she is there to do it," was the accepted sentiment.

In those days the birth of a daughter was regarded as a disaster. The pioneer feminist, Dame Millicent Fawcett is quoted as writing that in 1871 "and for many years after, it was the general habit of Members of Parliament to receive any mention of women or of childbirth with roars of laughter."

George Bernard Shaw has recorded hearing similar hilarity among members of a London Health Committee discussing maternity and child welfare.

Miss Brittain does not see the two world wars as playing a major part in the emancipation of woman. "Wars have speeded revolutions by violently destroying antiquated structures which in quieter periods collapse more slowly and less painfully," she writes.

By no means a dispassionate recorder, as she admits, Miss Brittain's very partiality breathes a life into a work that must of necessity quote a great many statistics.

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By MONA WILLIAMS

John's New Wife

MRS. PIPER came into her daughter's bedroom and closed the door. Phyllis knew that she had come to talk about Dotty, but that she would speak of something else first. Mrs. Piper was too kind, too much of a lady to criticise openly any guest under her roof; and, besides, Dotty was doubly protected because she bore the family name.

None of them had ever seen her until she arrived at the airport an hour before; still, she could hardly be spoken of as an outsider. She had been married to John for nearly two years, and she had come all the way from the west to meet John's people.

Mrs. Piper stood at the window and looked out at the summer twilight. "The Lamberts said something about bringing a present tomorrow night. I shouldn't have mentioned that it was our daughter-in-law's birthday. I don't want people thinking they must bring presents."

Phyllis said, "But John made such a point of it! His last letter practically demanded that we make a fuss over her birthday. You'd think she'd be embarrassed."

"That's why I decided against a cake with candles. We'll just have cake along with the refreshments. She's so young," Mrs. Piper went on gently.

"I hadn't realised from John's letter that she was so much younger than he—twenty-two tomorrow." She turned and gave Phyllis a slow, bewildered look. "Why, she's four years younger than you are."

Phyllis got up and picked up her hairbrush. In a season when other girls cut their hair short she wore hers long, brushed back from her face and caught in a soft bun at the nape of her neck. With her small face and slender neck she had an adolescent look.

Well, twenty-six was young, too! Her father called her "little girl," and her parents' friends, the people with whom she spent most of her time, treated her like a child. "It's so lovely to have a young thing around," they said indulgently, and "You wouldn't remember that—it was before your day."

"If only John could have come, too!" Phyllis burst out. "It would seem so much more natural—the whole situation. It seems so strange to be giving a birthday party for someone who's a total stranger."

"She's not a stranger, Phyllis; she's John's wife. And the baby is our own flesh and blood. It was—it was dear of John to send them on to us when he found he couldn't get away himself."

But Phyllis knew that Mrs. Piper would gladly have given up days of Dotty and the baby for one glimpse of her son. John should have known!

When the business emergency came up and prevented his coming, he should have realised that to send on these two aliens would make the disappointment even keener.

"Did you hear what Father said at the airport—that she was so much prettier than her picture that he didn't know her? Don't you think that was on the effusive side?"

"She is pretty," Mrs. Piper said loyally. "She's certainly the healthiest-looking girl I ever saw. She's just—well, so frank and breezy about everything that she quite takes my breath away!"

She glanced at Phyllis' little clock. "I must go down and talk to Nellie about dinner. Knock on Dotty's door, dear. Tell her dinner is at seven. And see if there's anything she needs."

Phyllis stood for a second outside the room that used to be John's, long ago when she was a child and John was her big brother. When he went to the west, it became a guest room.

With her hand lifted to knock, she had a sense of the old, lovely security, of being the child of the house sent to summon the grown-ups to dinner.

"Dotty, may I come in?"

"Of course, Heavens, why all the formality?"

Dotty was sitting on the bed, pillows stuffed at her

back, feeding the baby. The room, transformed from its fastidious preparation, was a welter of half-unpacked clothes and scattered infant belongings. Phyllis shrank involuntarily from such flamboyant disorder.

"Dinner will be in half an hour. Can I get you anything—or help you unpack?" she asked hesitantly.

"Not a thing—everything's wonderful! Could you hand me one of those nappies in case he's sick? Although he was perfect on the plane. Just ate and slept, ate and slept, all the way."

Gingerly Phyllis handed Dotty a fresh napkin.

"There. He's positively stuffed." Dotty sat up. "Want to hold him a minute while I get on some clothes?"

She handed the baby to Phyllis and stood up, a tall, round-cheeked girl with crisp curly hair and merry eyes.

"I suppose I save my best outfit for tomorrow night. Father tells me there's going to be a party."

"Father?"

Dotty grinned, struggling into a bright-patterned print. "I know. Gives you a twinge, doesn't it, to hear me call him that? But he asked me to, and if I started out with Mr. Piper it would be harder to switch later on. John said not to be standoffish. He gave me a lecture about getting off on the right foot with everybody."

John's been away so long he's forgotten, Phyllis thought silently. He's forgotten Mother. To get off on the right foot with Mother it was much better to be standoffish. Perhaps she

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Illustrated by Ron Laskie

As Mrs. Piper looked aghast at the precious plates Dotty said breezily, "I thought it would be lovely to use them."

Ron Laskie



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Come, My Beloved

SITTING alone in his study, Ted was absorbed in his books. The study was a small quiet room, the last in a chain of rooms opening into the common court, which was also the back garden, walled with earth. One side of the room was windowless and against it he had hung, years ago, the portrait of his mother, which his grandfather had willed to him instead of to his father.

Years ago he had been reconciled to thinking of Agnes as his father's wife. He had never regretted his own marriage to Ruth. She had helped him to plunge deep into India, so deep that he had had no furloughs in the seventeen years since their marriage.

Neither he nor Ruth had wanted to break the continuity of the days and the years.

And where would he go if he did go to America again? Such shallow roots as schooldays had given him were withered away and his grandfather was long dead.

Let him be honest with himself. The thought of his father and Agnes living in the old Fifth Avenue house made return impossible to that only home he had known in his own country. It was one thing to be reconciled to his father's marriage, it was another to enter into the house which now belonged to Agnes.

It was absurd to think of her as a stepmother, and certainly her influence must pervade the house since it was she who had made his father decide not to return to India. Explain it as he would, his father had never been able to explain that withdrawal.

"I have finished with India," his father had written after his grandfather's death. "Younger men must carry on my work. I had dreamed once that you, my son, would have taken up my mantle, but since that was not to be, the springs have dried in me. I should have been lonely, indeed, were it not for Agnes, my sweet young wife. She has a right to live the life which suits her so happily here in New York."

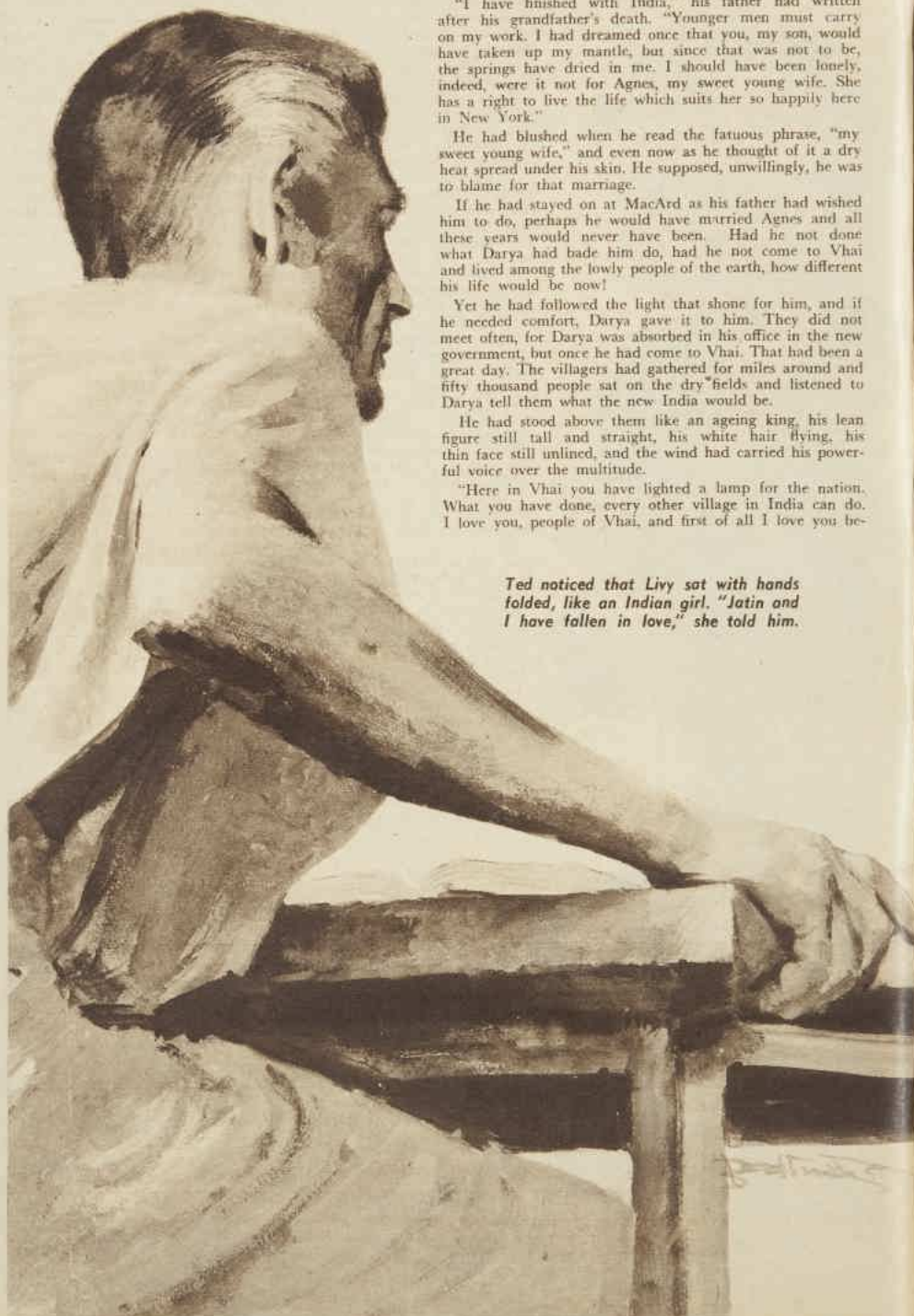
He had blushed when he read the fatuous phrase, "my sweet young wife," and even now as he thought of it a dry heat spread under his skin. He supposed, unwillingly, he was to blame for that marriage.

If he had stayed on at MacArd as his father had wished him to do, perhaps he would have married Agnes and all these years would never have been. Had he not done what Darya had bade him do, had he not come to Vhai and lived among the lowly people of the earth, how different his life would be now!

Yet he had followed the light that shone for him, and if he needed comfort, Darya gave it to him. They did not meet often, for Darya was absorbed in his office in the new government, but once he had come to Vhai. That had been a great day. The villagers had gathered for miles around and fifty thousand people sat on the dry fields and listened to Darya tell them what the new India would be.

He had stood above them like an ageing king, his lean figure still tall and straight, his white hair flying, his thin face still unlined, and the wind had carried his powerful voice over the multitude.

"Here in Vhai you have lighted a lamp for the nation. What you have done, every other village in India can do. I love you, people of Vhai, and first of all I love you be-



Ted noticed that Livy sat with hands folded, like an Indian girl. "Jatin and I have fallen in love," she told him.

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cause the man who has lit the lamp for you, as you will light it for others, is the man who is like my own son."

That day was his reward, and thinking of it now, as he thought of it so often, Ted straightened himself and lifted his head.

Yes, he had his rewards. When independence was declared, many white men left India and no Indian spoke against their going. But he, Ted MacArd, had been invited and urged to stay, not only by the new Prime Minister and by Darya but by Vhai itself. The people would not let him go. Ah, he had his rewards!

Jehar, travelling to and fro over India, came sometimes to this quiet room, and then at early morning or as now at twilight, the Christian sadhu taught him that faith comes from many sources. It was Jehar who had explained to him the spiritual ties between all the greatest of the leaders of men and to the same God, whatever His name.

Thus Moses and the Hebrew prophets, thus David and Paul, were brothers to Tukaram, the Sudra grainseller, who sixteen centuries later had lived in Dehu, a village some eighteen miles north-west of Poona itself.

Tukaram had gone through his own Gethsemane, and famine, white over the land, and the dying voice of his young wife crying for food while he had no food, had driven him into the complete service of God.

This evening, for his devotions, Ted had been reading again the story of Tukaram, so strangely like the life of St. Francis of Assisi. He read of the birds that perched on Tukaram's shoulders in the temple, knowing him to be "a friend of the world."

As Pharisees and Sadducees had persecuted Jesus, so the Brahmins had persecuted Tukaram. They would have none of him because of his lowly birth and because he could not believe, as they did, that Nirvana was the highest state of the human soul.

He did not wish, he said, "to be a dewdrop in the silent sea," and he shared in the lives of men, and thus he sang:

"The mother knows her child—his secret heart,
His joy or woe.
Who holds the blind man's heart alone can tell
Where he desires to go."

As always when he was moved by the Hindu poets, Ted returned again to the Christian New Testament, sometimes frightened, as he himself knew, lest the seat of his heart be shaken by those who had never known Christ, and he read again, "Except ye become as little children—"

Then he heard footsteps, a double rhythm, the soft sandalled footsteps of a girl and then the slower steps of a man. At the curtain they paused, and he heard his daughter's voice, "Bapu, may we come in?"

Livy spoke in the Vhai version of Hindustani, but he answered in English, "Come in, my dear."

She was indeed his dear daughter, his best-loved child, and he looked up from the sacred books on the table before him to see Jatin Das with her. His heart chilled and he put down his Testament. Nothing is secret in a village, and he had heard whispers, half hesitating and reluctant murmurs, that Livy had been seen alone with Jatin.

He had not heeded talk. Livy was an American, and though she had grown up in Vhai until she went to the boarding school in Simla, he could not believe that she would forget her origin. Jatin, too, belonged to no ordinary Hindu family. He had been reared in Bombay, where the English were proud, and he would not reach for what must remain beyond him.

"Come in, Livy," he said in his usual kindly manner.

"And you, too, Jatin. Seat yourselves, please. Has the rain stopped?"

"Yes, but there are mists," Livy said.

She sat down quietly and folded her hands in the manner, he suddenly perceived, of the Indian girls among whom she had lived. He saw, too, that she wore a sari as she often did, but now it seemed to him that he had seen her in no other garb since she came home from school.

"What will you do when you go to America: to college and cannot wear a sari?" he asked lightly.

"Father," Livy said, "I do not wish to go to America."

Now he was really disturbed. "Of course you must go, Livy. Your grandfather would be very angry if you did not go, and your great-grandfather put money in trust expressly for you, before you were born."

Livy looked at Jatin from the corners of her long, dark eyes, asking him to speak for her.

"Sir," Jatin said and cleared his throat. "Sir, we are in great distress. She and I—we have fallen into the wish to marry one another."

"Jatin and I have fallen in love," Livy said distinctly.

"Yes, it is so," Jatin said, and taking courage now that the difficult word was spoken, his words came in a rush, liquid and fluent, overwhelming his diffidence.

"It cannot be helped, Mr. MacArd, sir. It is the logical sequence, the inevitable outcome of the teachings of our childhoods. You have taught us to love one another, she has learned at your feet, sir, to regard all human beings as equal, alike children of God. And I, sir, taught in MacArd Memorial school in Poona, there took courage to cease to be a Hindu as my father was, and I was converted by the great Jehar and nourished by Daryaji towards independence. I do not fear to love her. I glory in our courage. We are the fruit of all that has gone in the past, we are the flower of our ancestry, the proof of our faith!"

His fervid eyes, his glowing words, the impetuous grace of his outstretched hands, the long fingers bending backward, the thumbs apart and tense, the white palms con-

trasted against the dark skin, all were too Indian, and in one of the rare moments of revulsion which Ted considered his secret sin, he was now revolted and sick. What—his Livy, his darling daughter?

None of his other children had her beauty or her grace, or her brilliant comprehending mind. She alone was all MacArd, and was she to give up everything for this alien man?

For a moment his soul swam in darkness. No, and for ever, no! He had given his life to India in Vhai, but Livy he would not give. It was not to be asked of him. This was a cup which even the saints had not to drink, and Jesus, the celibate, who had never a child, could make no such demand.

"No!" The word burst from him. "I cannot allow it."

Jatin's hands dropped. He turned to Livy and they exchanged a long look, his despairing, hers hardening to anger.

"Livy," her father demanded. "Have you told your mother?"

"Yes," Livy said, "and she said she did not dare to tell you. But I dare."

He got to his feet. "Where is your mother?"

"In the sewing-room," Livy said.

He went away, the door curtain swinging behind him, and Livy stretched out her arms to Jatin.

"I shall never give you up," she cried under her breath. "Jatin, faith, hope, and love, but the greatest of these is love—"

He turned away his head. "Not our love."

"Yes, our love," she insisted. She went to him, she put her arms about him, and held his head against her breast. Under his cheek he felt the quickening beat of her heart.

"You see for yourself that it is impossible," Ted insisted.

"Oh, yes, I see," Ruth agreed indistinctly. She had not stopped her sewing, though she knew as soon as he came in

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ILLUSTRATED BY BOOTHROYD



Am I Blue

By J. RAMSEY ULLMAN

It was too hot to reach for a drink. The sun was transfixed in the exact contour of the sky, like an egg frying in a blue pan. The jungle, which ended a scant fifty yards behind the bungalow, loomed through the screening in rigid, petrified stillness.

A ship had come in during the morning—one of those old Chinese tubs that trade through the islands—but they were waiting until it grew cooler to unload her. I was waiting, too.

A rubber plantation does not grow of its own free will, the well-publicised luxuriance of the tropics notwithstanding, and we were currently engaged in the arduous business of pruning and transplanting a stand of seedlings.

In the oven of that noontime, however, the seedlings could wait. When the great heat clamps down over the north New Guinea coast, time itself waits.

Through a half-dozen I heard voices approaching the bungalow. At first I assumed they belonged to a couple of my native foremen; I knew that the Reverend Thirkill, the only other white man in Botowayo, had gone to a neighboring village for the day.

But the next moment I was brought up as if by an electric shock. The voices were talking English. Not only that, but one of them was a woman talking English.

You do not meet many white men in a remote trading post at the mouth of a jungle river in north New Guinea. In two years my contacts with my own race had consisted of Thirkill, who represented a Scottish missionary society, and a handful of Dutch and English traders.

I jumped up; and there, coming down the path towards the bungalow, were a man and a woman, with one of the black boys from the village showing them the way.

"Hello, there!" I shouted, coming down the steps. The sight of two white faces was so momentous I wouldn't have been surprised if I had kissed them.

The man said hello, and came up and shook hands. Then I turned to the woman, but she wasn't interested in civilities. "Look," she said, "we're in trouble."

By this time I had had a fair look at them, and from their appearance it wasn't hard to believe she was telling the truth. They were as seedy looking a pair as I had seen in my life. I could tell right off they were Americans—the way they spoke, mostly, and I didn't need a detective to see they hadn't come off any luxury liner.

The man was a little fellow, sort of haunted looking, in a threadbare serge suit. Why he didn't keel over with it in that heat, I'll never know. He moved with sharp, jerky gestures and had a quick, nervous face.

From the first, though, I was more interested

in the woman than in the man—which wasn't unnatural, I suppose, considering I hadn't seen a white woman, aside from a couple of Dutch skippers' wives, in nearly two years.

The first thing I saw was her hair. It was that platinum stuff, obviously dyed in some places, rather streaky.

She had quite an attractive-looking face—small features, and eyes that a man would have noticed if they hadn't been so tired—but there was too much make-up, and most of it had run in the heat.

Actually, she was about the same size as the man, but she looked much bigger—good shoulders, a straight carriage, a body that looked firm and a little hard. I noticed her legs particularly; there were big knots of muscle at the calves and they moved up and down when she walked.

I brought them up on the verandah and offered them a drink. The woman shook her head, but the man said, "I'll tell the world!" I put a bottle of Scotch and a glass beside him and told him to help himself.

Then he began his story. To make it short, this ship that had just come in was dumping them here on Botowayo.

"Where was it supposed to take you?" I asked.

"To Australia," he told me. "Sydney." Then it came out that they were—of all things—a vaudeville team from the States. For the past year they had been appearing in picture houses and cafes from Tokio to Singapore.

Their names were Perkins and Polly, and I never found out anything more. I don't know to this day if they were husband and wife, or what. Not that it matters.

They had last been in Hongkong, where they were booked for some sort of engagement, and that seemed to have been the end of the line. "After three or four weeks," he said, "we found ourselves running very low in funds."

Perkins went on to explain that they'd reached the point where they were two jumps ahead of starvation when a cable came from their agent, saying that he had booked them for ten weeks in some picture-house circuit in Australia and that they should sail immediately. The only thing he had missed out was the little matter of sending some money to them.

But it was either Australia or the junk-heap for them, and somehow they had managed to scrape up enough to take passage on this Chinese tramp. They had left Hongkong ten days before and had been due in Sydney in another week.

And then, when they were just off the New Guinea coast, the blow had fallen. A wireless message had come to the ship, ordering it to return at once to China. A few hours later it had put in at Botowayo and was now preparing for the voyage back. They had their choice of returning with it or getting off.

Perkins' voice had grown more and more strained as he told his story, and at the end he was staring at me in desperation.

"We can't go back!" he concluded. "We'd starve!"

"There'll be a ship of the Dutch Royal Packet Line touching here in three weeks," I told him. "It goes on to Melbourne."

"Three weeks!"

I nodded. "This is an out-of-the-way place, you know."

For a moment, Perkins just looked at me. Then he said softly: "But even if we had money for our passage, that wouldn't do us any good. This booking we have begins in ten days. If we're not there we're"—he hesitated, groping—"we're through."

"Surely you'll get other—er—engagements," I said.

The woman broke in with a sound that might have been a laugh. I looked at her almost with a start.

"Sure," she said in a flat voice, "the president or whatever they got there is gonna give us a grand a week to dance at the palace."

Perkins started to plead: "There must be something you can do. You've got to do something!" His face was rolling sweat and his eyes were screwed up as if he were going to cry.

"I'll see that you're put up while you're here," I told him.

"But that's no good," he wailed. "Don't you understand? We haven't had a real job in months. We've got nothing. Our only chance is this thing in Sydney, and if we miss it we're finished." Suddenly he grabbed hold of my hands. "Please help us! Please!"

I don't know whether I felt sicker in my heart or my stomach. I pulled my hands away and said: "At least try to be a man about it."

"Sit down, you dope," said the woman. Perkins collapsed heavily in his chair and poured himself another drink.

She turned to me, and her face under the running make-up was like some sort of hard rock. "To make it short and sweet," she said, "you're telling us there's just nothing we can do?"

"I can't order the Chinese government to change its mind," I said. "I can't make another ship show up in Botowayo just by wishing for it. All I can do is see that you're taken care of until the packet comes in."

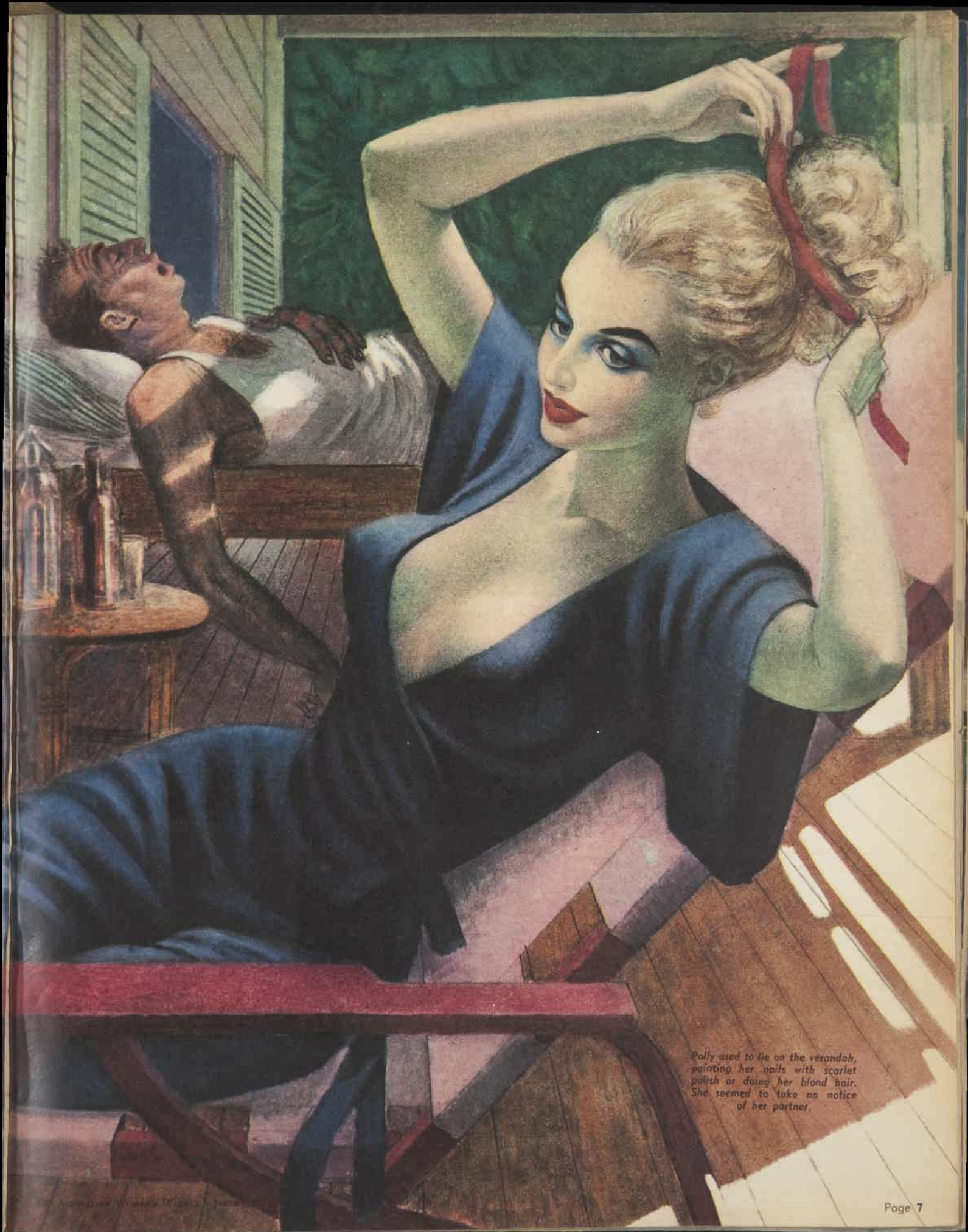
Perkins put his hands over his face and started to shake all over. The woman stood up. "Okay, mister," she said. "If that's the way it is, okay."

That afternoon they moved in with me. Not that I wanted them, but there was nowhere else for them to go. So up came their trunk from the ship, with half the village trailing after. It was

To page 60.

ILLUSTRATED BY KEITH DALGLEISH

Keith Dalgleish



Polly used to lie on the verandah,
painting her nails with scarlet
polish or doing her blond hair.
She seemed to take no notice
of her partner.

She knew her parents loved her, but they would never realise how lonely a little girl can be.

Seven Came Flying

BY MAUREEN LUSON



Illustrated by T. Medhurst

JOANNA had had her bath, brushed her hair, and said her prayers, and now she was in bed, waiting to be said good night to; usually she invented a dozen pretexts to delay the moment when the beautiful activity of day ended, to be superseded by the boredom of night.

But tonight was different; Joanna wriggled with impatience. Tonight she longed so passionately to be alone with her secret that she had thought bedtime would never come.

Now Mummy was talking on the telephone and Daddy was listening to a dull old talk on the radio.

If only they would come, thought Joanna, and say good night quickly and turn out the light and shut the door and leave her alone in the moonlit dimness—but tonight she wouldn't be alone, because she had her secret.

Joanna tingled with the ecstatic knowledge of her secret; her small hand, damp and hot, explored beneath the pillow and touched the matchbox tenderly. Yes, it was quite safe, and hidden by the hem of the pillowcase; and there was plenty of air—the breeze from the open window was blowing right on the bed.

Had she time for just one peep before Mummy and Daddy came? wondered Joanna. She sat up, hugging her knees, listening.

She could hear the staccato bark of the radio voice, and, like a violin accompaniment, Mummy talking to Pam's Mummy: "Oh, she had such a lovely time! She hasn't said very much—but her eyes! Thank you so very much for having her—I know how pent-up she gets in the flat and how she looks forward to being with Pam."

After the first day she had spent at Pam's home, Joanna had returned to the tall block of flats fronting the busy street loaded with misery that was all the harder to bear because she knew that not even Mummy and Daddy could assuage it. The flats were small and expensive, and Mummy and Daddy had explained how difficult it was to find anywhere to live and how lucky they had been to get a flat.

Joanna had agreed that a flat was nicer than the house they had shared with the elderly couple who disliked children and mess, and who gossiped and interlarded and quarrelled with everyone. At least the flat would be their own. But the lease, that all-important paper that Daddy had to sign before they could move, had stated uncompromisingly "No Pets" and had qualified it with "Of any kind."

Daddy had told Joanna how, when you lived in flats, you had to consider the other tenants and how, if some of the twenty families in the block kept dogs and cats and birds, others would object.

Daddy had said, too, that it wasn't really kind to keep an animal in a flat, for animals, like children, needed

plenty of space and open air and exercise; and, unlike children, they could not be made to understand about considering other tenants.

Joanna had tried very hard to conceal the pain of her disappointment, for she had always been told that when they did find a home of their own she would be given a pet; and a puppy or kitten would be the next best thing to a brother or sister.

Pam had no brothers or sisters, either, but she had a wonderful farm home with a wild garden full of trees to climb and crannies for hide-and-seek, and paddocks stretching round it.

Pam had a pony, a puppy, and kittens, and there were four other dogs, numberless cats, and chooks and lambs and funny, fascinating pigs.

After her day there, Joanna had gone straight to her room to tell the dolls all about it; they sat in a row on the floor exactly as she had left them that morning. Trude, the big doll with the yellow curls, Bianca, who had come from Italy and said "mama" and had pink fingernails, Goggie, the baby doll, and Teddy, the belovedest, whose nose was worn threadbare with constant kissing.

"Pam hasn't any dolls," Joanna said to them. "She doesn't like dolls. But I'm sure when she comes here and gets to know you she'll like you," she added, knowing with terrible certainty that Pam wouldn't; she thought dolls babyish and dull.

The dolls stared. Joanna clasped her hands tightly and wished and wished, with all the intensity of her unhappiness, that once, just this once, they would show their understanding of what she said to them, their appreciation of the love and care she had lavished upon them, the long hours she had invented games with them.

"Of course, Pam is really too busy to look after dolls," said Joanna. "You see, dears, she has pets. A puppy and kittens, and a pony, chestnut with white socks. And she looks after them all by herself, just as I look after you." She smiled at them, smoothed Trude's ringlets, straightened Bianca's dress, folded Goggie's shawl around her.

They faced her, static, dumb—and lifeless.

"Pam's pets love her," said Joanna urgently. "Like you love me."

She gathered Teddy into her arms, stroking his patchy fur; when she had held the puppy he had whined and licked her fingers and chewed the buttons of her cardigan; the kittens had clawed at her shoelaces and rolled and leapt about her. Teddy did nothing.

Teddy was only fur and stuffing. "I hate you all," said Joanna suddenly. "You aren't real. I've done my best to make you real. I've pretended and pretended. But now I can't even pretend to pretend any more. I know you're just silly, useless—things!"

She struggled against the sobs that rose in her throat, the shameful tears that scorched her cheeks, turning her back on the dolls. But deep inside her she knew that she didn't care that she was crying in front of them, because they couldn't see her—they couldn't see anything, or hear anything, or know anything.

Pam's animals were living, loving playmates; she was their mistress, their goddess and their queen. Pam didn't really need a sister or brother.

Joanna's days had lost their radiance and the nights seemed more dreary than ever, because sleep only brought dreams of the pony's flying hoofs, of the lovely bonelessness of the puppy's warm body, of the bottomless softness of the kittens' coats, of the busy, pecking beaks of the chooks when Pam threw them corn.

But today had changed everything; Joanna's hand stole under the pillow again, feeling for the matchbox.

They had gone into the garden to cut a cabbage for lunch, she and Pam, when they had seen the crows come flying lazily over the peppercorn trees.

"One for sorrow, two for joy," chanted Pam. "Three for a letter, four for something better, five for silver, six for gold, seven—why, Jo, there are seven! Seven for—for a secret, never to be told! I wonder what the secret will be?"

"I wonder," Joanna had said, and then she looked down at the green globe of the cabbage in her arms, and there was a little snail shyly investigating the abrupt removal of his world.

The crows sailed away into the fathomless blue of the sky, and the wonderful idea was born.

"No one would ever know," Pam had said. "And it wouldn't be cheating, because you didn't sign the paper."

"And he's so small, and so quiet," Joanna breathed. "He'd be a lovely pet!"

Joanna withdrew the matchbox from its hiding-place; there were

holes punched in the lid, and bits of grass sticking out. Excitement warm in her, she pushed the tray of the matchbox out, and on the morsel of cabbage leaf, his polished shell enshrined jewel-like on the green, lay the snail.

"He's my pet, and my secret," thought Joanna. "And Mummy and Daddy mustn't ever know, or it would be cheating over the lease. And it isn't cheating the other children in the flats, because they've all got brothers or sisters."

As if conscious of Joanna's rapturous gaze, the snail's black, glistening body emerged fluidly from the orifice of the shell, his tiny head, crowned by its two questing horns, peering to survey his new surroundings.

"You're sweet," whispered Joanna. "I believe you know me already."

The snail undulated to the rim of the box, looped himself over it, and slid down on to Joanna's hand; he circled the quivering pinkness of her palm, and set off up her cushioned round arm.

"You tickle," smiled Joanna.

In the tender hollow of her elbow, the snail paused, rearing, so that she could see the pearly white of his underside. Not daring to stir, Joanna watched him, utterly absorbed; she did not hear her mother replace the telephone receiver, nor the switching off of the radio.

"Joanna! What have you got? Ugh! A revolting snail!"

She raised her eyes and saw her parents standing beside the bed, saw the amused disgust on her father's face, her mother's hooped eyebrows. She felt the shell roll off her arm as the snail took refuge inside.

She was cold, and there was a sickness heavy in her stomach, for the secret was hers no longer. She picked up the shell, wishing that she could hide herself away from the awfulness. The snail would have to go now, she thought, putting him carefully back in the matchbox. Mummy and Daddy would be kind, thought Joanna, they wouldn't—kill him; they wouldn't tread on him, shattering his fragile armor,

Unhappily Joanna took Teddy into her arms and for once she could not pretend he was alive.

squashing the defenceless, shining livingness of him to horrible, formless death.

"Perhaps," said Joanna, her tragedy stark in her eyes, "you could put him in the park, Daddy. And then I could go and see him and feed him. There wouldn't be any cabbage in the park. And he loves cabbage, he used to live in one."

Daddy didn't answer, his face was all screwed up now in the strangest way. And Mummy was sitting on the bed, her arms holding and comforting.

"Darling," Mummy was saying, "you brought him from Pam's? For a pet—?"

"Yes," Joanna didn't know why Mummy's voice made her cry, for it wasn't angry at all, only sort of sorry. "He was going to be my secret, so that it would be all right about Daddy signing the lease—"

Daddy looked at Mummy and then said slowly: "Never mind, Chick. Look, Mummy and I found out your secret, so I guess we'll have to tell you another to make up for it."

Night, thought Joanna, snuggling into the pillow, was a dreadful waste of time. Tomorrows took so long to come. Beautiful, super Tomorrow, when she would watch the snail feeding on the young, yellow cabbage heart in the fine, big jar Mummy had put him in; when she would take him to the park and find a nice new home for him where he wouldn't be lonely for other snails.

Golden Tomorrow, when she would think of the new, stupendous secret; when Mummy would show her how many stitches to cast on for a singlet for a baby brother or sister.

Poor Pam, thought Joanna, poor darling Pam; she would have to be very specially nice to Pam, who was an only child.

(Copyright)

The Royal Tour



*This is an old, old land; before recorded time
It sprawled as now, in blazing summer sun,
Sleeping through centuries while armies marched
And cities crumbled in forgotten dust.*

*Now is its Royal summer; and its Queen
Sails on her voyage of discovery.
She sees the coast that Cook saw; his silent shores
Are clamorous with people, decked with flags.*

*So she will fly, spanning a continent, this English girl.
From crowds to cheering crowds; and glimpse below
Those wide and lonely wastes where once
Came other English girls, braving a wilderness to*

bring

Like hers, the soft brief beauty of an English spring.

— DOROTHY DRAIN



**A special supplement to mark the
visit of Queen Elizabeth II and the
Duke of Edinburgh to Australia.**

• The picture, above right, shows the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh leaving the House of Assembly, Bermuda, on the first stage of their journey round the world.

Democratic Duke, thoughtful husband

By ANNE MATHESON, our Royal tour correspondent

The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh have almost perfected their team work on this Royal tour. So smoothly do they team at formal and informal functions that even the most arduous days are passing without a hitch.

MORE and more I am impressed with the Duke of Edinburgh's unobtrusive way of helping the Queen carry out her long programme.

He is her "right hand." And though the Queen is doing a magnificent job meeting as many people as possible in this young Dominion, she could not accomplish nearly so much if it were not for the Duke of Edinburgh's constant help.

From the moment this Royal husband-and-wife team step off each day on the red carpet till the last wave from the balcony to the crowds below their hotel or residence, their perfect partnership puts everyone at ease.

This, more than any other single factor, is making the tour such a grand success.

The Duke keeps the most constant watch over the Queen.

Even when the day's long programme is over he is ready to help her for the functions ahead.

This assistance will be of enormous value to the Queen in Australia, where the programme includes visits to heavy industry and factories, in which the Queen—as a woman—has no great interest.

A member of the Queen's Household told me the Duke is so intensely interested in everything scientific and industrial that he can "bring the whole thing to life" for her.

But this is rather the background of their working partnership.

The formal function is where the Duke really helps the Queen over immediate difficulties.

Relieves tension

HE never lets her be stuck with people who do not "give." Leaning slightly forward he will relieve the tension with his quick wit and natural way of expressing himself.

With everyone at ease the Queen is then able to continue receiving and talking to people, and consequently the tour does not lag.

The Duke's quick eye misses nothing. He is not the centre of attention and can consequently look around and pick out something of interest to show the Queen.

As soon as the Queen has received officials the Duke will mention some little item that has caught his eye, and this gives the Queen a talking point.

It would be impossible for the Queen to receive, speak

to the people, and at the same time take in the broad scene. It would be hurtful to those same people who have gone to so much trouble if the Queen did not notice something of what they have done.

When we were in the J. Waitie canneries at Hastings, the Duke drew the Queen's attention to a group of factory girls in green uniforms who were standing some distance away from the machinery and conveyor belts.

"Look," he said. "They are sorting the bad peas from the good peas."

In this way the Duke brought the factory girls into the picture, and a smile to the Queen's face. The Queen had her attention diverted from the seemingly never-ending conveyor belts and rows of machinery.

He is always on the lookout for children or old people or ex-servicemen or those who are not on the official programme but are given special seats to be near the Queen because of their standing in the community, and he takes care that they are not overlooked. He will take his place beside and slightly behind the Queen and look quizzically at each group.

Maybe he will ask one of the officials something about the people, and the moment there is a pause the Duke will either whisper to the Queen or even point, and the Queen will smile to the group.

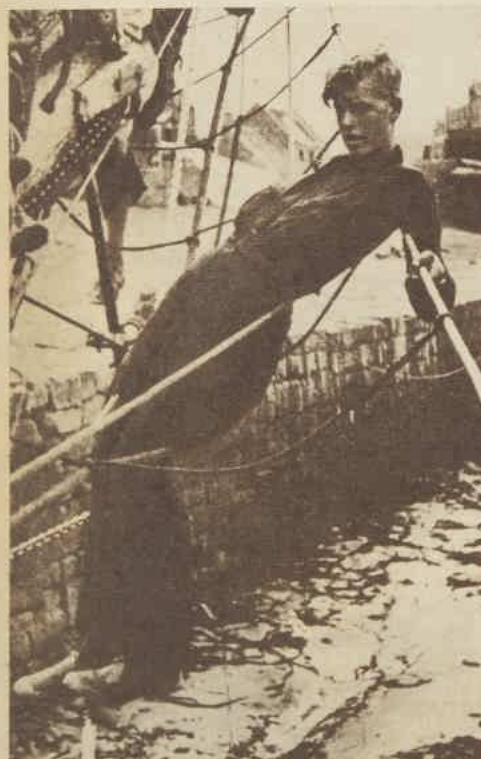
"Look, Bet, aren't they lovely?" he said at Whaka when the Queen was so busy filming the geyser that she didn't see some tiny children diving for pennies.

The Duke's quips and wisecracks are most amusing.

To the Bowen brothers, Ivan and Godfrey, champion shearers, the Duke said, "No,



INTENT on a polo match at Cowdray Park, London, the Duke of Edinburgh is oblivious of the camera. Pictures of him informally dressed like this are becoming rare.



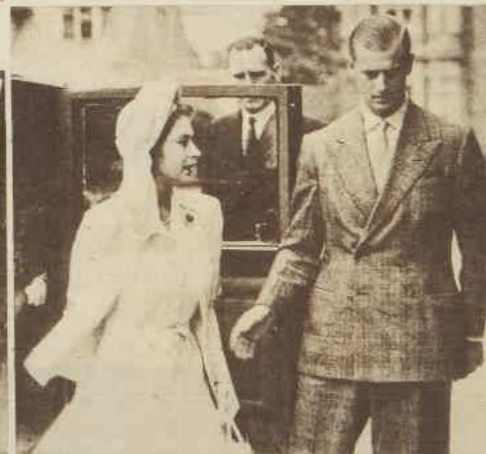
SCHOOLBOY Prince Philip was never happier, as here, than when "mucking around with boats." During the tour, he has lost no chance to go sailing or swimming.



AS A SENIOR at Gordonstoun School, Scotland, the Duke was interested in school theatricals. Here (left) he is in a Nativity play given in December, 1938.



BACHELOR PRINCE. Lieutenant Mountbatten takes a tumble in the revolving barrel at Luna Park, Sydney, in December, 1943, after a farewell party in H.M.S. Whelp.



ENGAGED. Lieutenant Mountbatten assists his fiancée, Princess Elizabeth, from her car on their arrival at the Royal Merchant Navy school where she distributed the prizes.

THE QUEEN'S RIGHT HAND MAN

I might nick them and we've had enough mutton on this tour," when they asked him would he like to shear a sheep.

The Queen laughed so unrestrainedly at this that the Bowens were delighted and put at their ease.

"We were feeling pretty awkward standing there in our bowties and working kit," they told me. "But the Duke's crack made us feel really good. He's a regular guy," they said.

As the tour moves through the country and I watch the Queen and Duke together, I find it hard to think of them separately.

They are such a perfect couple they give real meaning to the words "life partnership."

The Duke, as the Queen's husband, is her partner, and the closeness of this association helps the Queen enormously.

The moment they are in the car together after an official function, they smile and talk, recalling the endearing or amusing incidents.

This is so relaxing for the Queen that the strained look one sees on her face at the end of a long reception or rather dull function melts away.

By the time the Royal couple arrive at the next function the very first comment from the crowds is: "Isn't she fresh-looking!"

The Queen is also helped by the Duke on many of the broad issues of the tour.

For instance, if a change is suggested in the programme or the Queen is in any doubt about some appearance she is asked to make which has not yet been approved, the Queen will always promise to give her decision later.

This gives her a chance to discuss the problem with the Duke.

"I will ask my husband," would be her very natural wifely reply were she not the monarch. But as Queen these words cannot be spoken.

Nevertheless she does ask her husband, and though she has a strong mind of her own, she values his opinion and is guided by his counsel.

Equally in this Royal partnership the Queen is thinking about the Duke. When he

missed the Bowens' shearing at the Waikato Agricultural and Pastoral Association because he was attending the mass funeral of the unidentified victims of the train disaster, the Queen was so anxious he should see this wonderful exhibition of shearing that there was a command performance at Napier for him.

The Duke's whole approach to the tour is as fresh and stimulating as a cold drink on a hot day. He has no set pattern of behaviour to follow, so that he can do almost exactly as he pleases.

This gives him a wonderful opportunity to lift the dull routine of the tour into something lively and of more general interest.

He likes the informal village gatherings when leading citizens are presented to the Queen right in front of the neighbors.

He sees in these intimate little receptions another chance to meet the people, and he will often trail behind as these small functions are breaking up to have a word or two with the men.

It is usually a series of crisp questions and inquiry about the crops and the milk yields—sensible talk with solid people.

It helps the Queen enormously to know that those not in the receiving line are not being neglected.

Have their tiffs

LIKE any other married couple, the Queen and the Duke have their little tiffs.

You can almost tell when the Duke has been a "naughty boy," and it is rather touching to watch him coaxing the Queen back to good humor again.

When he takes the wheel of the car he travels fast. And nothing the Queen says can stop him.

But you can tell by her expression that she has been reprimanding him.

The Queen, however, is wifely and understanding and knows that the very qualities of enthusiasm and interest that make the Duke's company so delightful are the same qualities that send him speeding over the open roads.

The tiffs are soon over and forgotten.



THE DUKE shares a joke with the Queen as they perch on the back of the car on their return from Churchill Park, Lautoka, Fiji, after seeing an athletic meeting.



IN SYRIA, when the Duke was first lieutenant of the destroyer Chequers, he was the guest of honor at a State dinner. He is received by Rushdi Bey Kikhyo.



FATHER AND DAUGHTER. Warmly dressed against the cold, the Duke takes Princess Anne for a walk in the grounds of Balmoral Castle. This picture was taken in 1952.



IN TOPPER and morning suit (above), the Duke arrives with the Queen at Ascot. The Duke does not care for racing, but he usually accompanies the Queen.



QUEEN ELIZABETH and the Duke (right) exchange a joke with a Maori chief at Waitangi, in the North Island of New Zealand, during the Royal tour.



Wildflowers for Her Majesty

... painted as a tribute to Her Most Gracious Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II on the occasion of her first visit to Australia. The painting is the work of Muriel Elliott and has been commissioned by Wormald Brothers Industries.

WORMALD BROTHERS INDUSTRIES, AN AUSTRALIAN COMPANY ESTABLISHED IN 1889.





The Queen at Church

ESCORTED BY THE BISHOP OF AUCKLAND, the Right Reverend W. J. Simkin, the Queen leaves the Cathedral Church of St. Mary's at Parnell, Auckland, followed by the Duke of Edinburgh, after attending Divine Service on Christmas morning. The Queen wore a simply styled dress of primrose-yellow—her favorite tour color—with embroidered sleeves and neckline and white accessories. The Queen and the Duke stood with the congregation in two minutes' silence for the victims of the Tangier train tragedy.

Royal Progress through Sydney

Elizabeth's route tells history of Australia's oldest city

By a staff reporter

When Queen Elizabeth makes her Royal Progress through Sydney on the morning of February 3, she will not see the city with the eyes of a complete stranger.

FROM her studies as a young Princess she will know the history of the oldest city in Australia and will remember the stories told by her grandparents, parents, and her husband, the Duke of Edinburgh, of their visits to Sydney.

As the Royal couple drive slowly along nine miles of city streets the Duke will have many reminders of his stay in Sydney in 1946 as a Royal Navy lieutenant and of his earlier visit in 1940 as a boy of 19.

Near the Park Street corner of Elizabeth Street, for instance, he might easily point out to the Queen the "Daily Telegraph" building.

A camera enthusiast, he spent many off-duty hours in the photographic dark room there in 1946.

He will remember Dowling Street, too. In 1940 he attended a service at the Greek Orthodox Cathedral in this street.

Queen Elizabeth, the first reigning monarch to come to this country, will step ashore at Man o' War Steps, Farm Cove, approximately 166 years and one week after Captain Arthur Phillip landed at nearby Sydney Cove on January 26, 1788, to found the first settlement in Australia.

The Progress will take the Queen through the heart of

Sydney, showing her a cross-section of its busy life.

She will see the past constantly rubbing shoulders with the present and nowhere more than in the area near the Harbor.

In Macquarie Street, along which she and the Duke will drive into the centre of the city, old stone warehouses, many of them convict-built, would have a tale to tell Her Majesty.

They can look back on a time when sailing ships, the

Passengers on ships arriving in Sydney in those days used to think this imposing building was a castle or a fort. But it was the Government House stables.

Stallions were housed in the octagonal castellated towers which now reverberate to the sounds of violins, cellos, and pianos.

Two Sydney Hospitals, yesterday's and today's, stand side by side in Macquarie Street. The present hospital was opened in 1894.

The old one was erected between 1810 and 1817. Governor Macquarie paid the contractors with a monopoly of thousands of gallons of spirits to relieve the government of the cost of the building.

It is now State Parliament House, a pleasant, white-painted, wide-verandahed building where the Queen will open Parliament on the morning of February 4.

From this part of Macquarie Street the Queen will see ahead of her the wonderful view through Hyde Park to the Anzac Memorial.

Now the only extensive park area in the city proper, Hyde Park was just as popular in the colony's early days as it is today.

The first race meeting in Australia was held there in October, 1810, and three days' holiday was given to celebrate the occasion.

Later, in the 1830's, cricket matches were held on the racecourse.

Early architect Francis Greenway is remembered again in Queen's Square. He designed the present District Court building as a convict barracks.

Across the square, where the statue of Queen Victoria, the present Queen's great-grandmother, stands in its island garden in the centre of the tramway loop, is another Greenway building, the spired St. James' Church.

The Royal party will drive along Elizabeth and Park Streets and then up the broad slope of William Street to King's Cross.

Here, in the faces of the crowds cheering on the footpaths, they will see reflected



VIEW THROUGH HYDE PARK to the Archibald Memorial and beyond to the Anzac Memorial can be seen from Queen's Square, which lies on the Royal route. Hyde Park is almost as old as Sydney and was the scene of Australia's first race meeting.

the cosmopolitan atmosphere of this part of Sydney.

The route will now take the Queen through some of the city's most crowded residential areas.

Rows of terraced houses, many decked out in defiance of their age with brightly painted verandah railings, doors, and roofs, line Victoria, Dowling, and Cleveland Streets.

In Darlinghurst, Queen Elizabeth might notice, tucked in among the old buildings, little Green Park, an oasis of lawns and trees.

The old men who sun themselves there in the daytime, the children who play there after school will all be in the crowds watching Her Majesty pass by.

In Cleveland Street, shops and factories are the outward signs of Sydney's highly industrialised and commercialised life.

And looking ahead, the Queen will see the stately Gothic buildings of Sydney University, Australia's oldest university, which celebrated its centenary in October, 1952.

Just near the junction of Cleveland Street and Prince's Highway, a white-haired old lady will be among the spectators.

She is Mrs. Bertha Mackey, who sits on the balcony of her terrace house day in, day out, watching life roll by her door.

"Oh, yes, I'll be here the day the Queen goes by," she said.

"I was here the day her mother, Queen Elizabeth, passed, too. I was so close I could have touched her."

In Carillon Avenue the Queen will see the handsome University colleges.

In Missenden Road, the medical half-mile, she will see Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, founded to commemorate the lucky escape of the previous Duke of Edinburgh, Queen Victoria's second son, from an assassin's bullet at Clontarf in 1868.

Turning into Parramatta Road, the Royal car will proceed towards the Harbor again, through Broadway, the Haymarket, and George Street to Bridge Street.

These streets were busy when the colony was young.

Farmers and their waggons coming in from the country rattled down the hill that is now Broadway and past the spot where the railway clock tower now rises high above the surrounding buildings.

Smart city carriages joined the traffic flowing past the old cemetery, now the site of

St. Andrew's Cathedral, where the Queen and the Duke will worship on Sunday, February 7, and the Town Hall, where they will attend the Lord Mayor's Ball on Friday evening, February 5.

Driving down George St., the Queen's car will pause for a moment near the General Post Office, Victorian and colonnaded, while Her Majesty places a wreath on the Cenotaph.

When the First Fleet arrived, the waters of Sydney Cove lapped against Bridge Street, along which the Royal couple will drive to Government House.

The Tank Stream, early Sydney's freshwater supply, entered the Cove here. The stream is still there, but the Queen won't see it. It now runs underground as a sewer.

One of the colony's earliest public houses, owned by Thomas Reiby, probably Sydney's first merchant and licensed victualler, and his wife, was on the present site of Reiby Place, off Macquarie Place in Bridge Street.

The inn was called The Royal Admiral after the ship in which Reiby came out in 1792. His wife, Mary, who later became a wealthy property owner, was a compulsory passenger on the same ship.

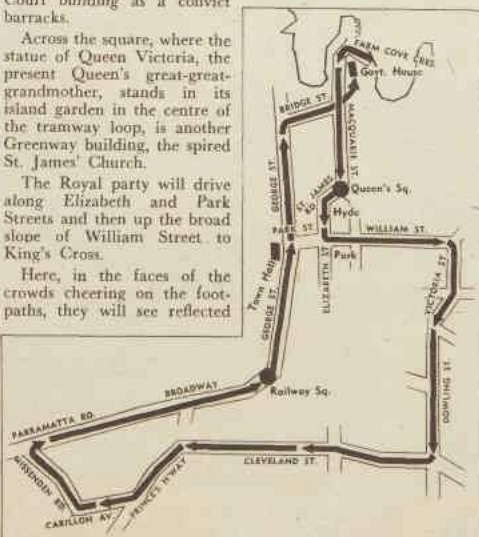
Macquarie Place once saw a historic moment in the city's growth. In April, 1826, the first street lamp to be erected was lighted there.

The city was not lit with gas until 1841. Electric lighting came in 1904.

Up the hill to Macquarie Street again the Queen will drive and, looking back, she might see above the buildings the towering arch of the Harbor Bridge, Sydney's proudest monument to progress.



CLOCK TOWER above Central Station, Sydney, is a striking landmark which the Royal car will pass as it turns into George Street on the last stage of the drive through the city.



ROUTE OF THE PROGRESS Queen Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh will make through Sydney streets after their arrival in the Royal yacht Gothic on February 3.

LEADERS WHO REPRESENT THE PEOPLE



CANBERRA. The Prime Minister, Mr. R. G. Menzies, Dame Pattie, and their daughter, Miss Heather Menzies, who met the Queen when they visited London for the Coronation last June, photographed at the Prime Minister's Lodge, Canberra. The Queen will open the National Parliament on February 15.

AS head of elected governments, the Prime Minister and the State Premiers will officially represent the Australian people to the visiting Monarch.



Accompanied by their wives, they will have the great honor of receiving the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh at banquets and receptions arranged to welcome the visiting Royal couple to the respective capital cities of the Commonwealth.



TASMANIA. The Premier, Mr. Robert Cosgrove, and Mrs. Cosgrove. The Queen arrives in Hobart in T.S.S. Gothic on February 20.



QUEENSLAND. The Premier, Mr. V. C. Gair, and Mrs. Gair. They will be host and hostess at a State reception in Brisbane on Tuesday, March 9.



WESTERN AUSTRALIA. The Premier of the State, Mr. A. R. G. Hawke (left). SOUTH AUSTRALIA. Above, the State Premier, Mr. Tom Playford, and Mrs. Playford.



NEW SOUTH WALES. The Premier of N.S.W., Mr. J. J. Cahill, and Mrs. Cahill. The Queen will attend a State banquet on February 4, the day after her arrival.



VICTORIA. The Premier of Victoria, Mr. John Cain, and Mrs. Cain. There will be a State reception on March 8 at the Melbourne Exhibition Building.

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And that's why Richard Hudnut Home Permanent also has the exclusive extra ingredient, Neutraliser Booster, to speed the action of the neutraliser and lock in your lovely soft wave. Because of Neutraliser Booster, **Richard Hudnut Home Permanent gives you a far better wave in half the time** taken for "no-neutraliser" waves. It's time-tested, safe, success-sure.



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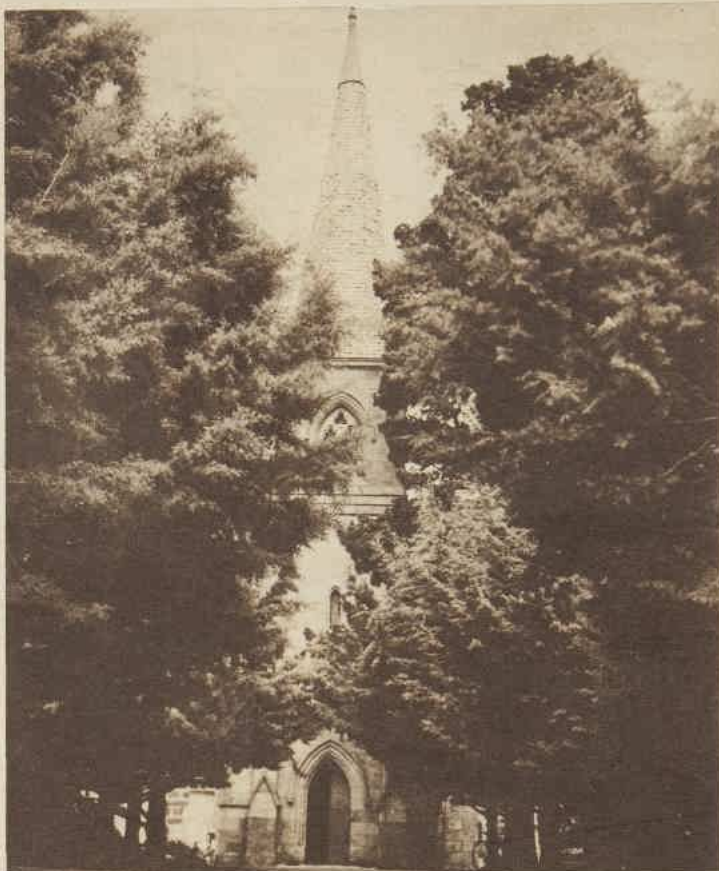


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ROYAL CHURCHES

These are some of the churches at which the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh will attend divine service here.



ST. JOHN'S, CANBERRA, where the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh will attend divine service on February 14. Built more than 100 years ago, the church seats about 240 people. Temporary seats will be provided for crowds outside under the trees.



LEFT: The Archbishop of Sydney, Dr. H. W. K. Moell. RIGHT: St. Andrew's Cathedral, Sydney, where Her Majesty and the Duke of Edinburgh will attend divine service on Sunday, February 7. Dr. Moell will preach the sermon for the Royal visitors.



INTERIOR of St. George's Cathedral, Perth, showing the jarrah, open-backed pews. The Royal couple will sit in the front pew on the right-hand side. The service on Sunday, March 28, will be conducted by the Very Reverend John Bell, Dean of Perth.



BISHOP of Canberra and Goulburn, the Right Rev. E. H. Burgmann, will preach for the Royal couple.



ARCHBISHOP of Melbourne, the Most Rev. Dr. J. J. Booth, will give the sermon before the Queen and the Duke at St. Paul's, Melbourne.



SECTION of St. John's, Canberra, showing the front pew where the Queen and the Duke will sit. Churches attended by Royalty during the tour will be "as usual," at the special request of Her Majesty, who says she goes not to look but "to worship."



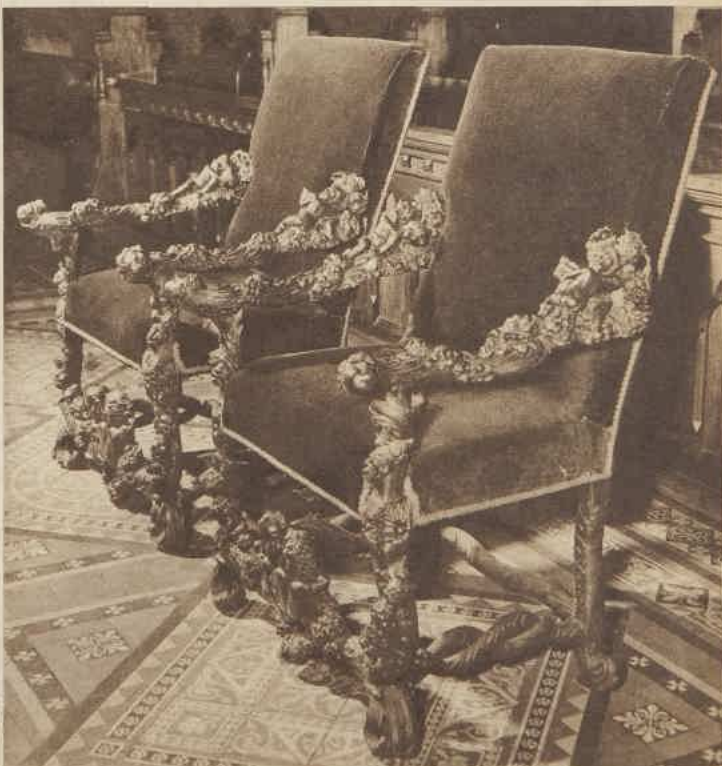
ARCHBISHOP R. C. Hulse (left) and Dean D. F. Taylor inspect a model of St. John's, Brisbane, showing how church will look when completed. Her Majesty will see the model.



LEFT: Pew (right foreground) at St. Peter's, Adelaide, where the Royal couple will worship during their visit to the lovely city of Adelaide.



RIGHT: 17th century Florentine chairs will be used by the Queen and the Duke when they worship at St. Paul's Cathedral, in Melbourne.



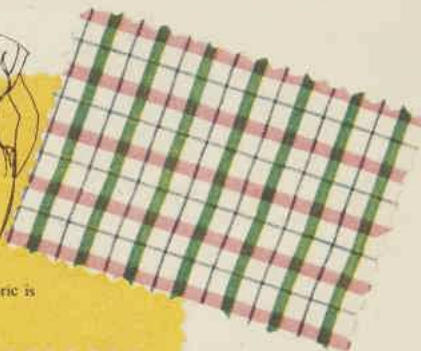


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Lingerie Fabrics

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She chooses her gowns with unerring taste

Most beautiful of all the lovely, elegant gowns in the Queen's wardrobe is her Coronation gown, which was flown to her from London at a cost of £75 so she could wear it at the openings of Parliament in New Zealand and Canberra.

PACKING up the lovely, heavily beaded gown to travel by air freight was a work of art, and was done by experts who specialise in parcelling up the world's treasures for sea and air journeys.

The gown was suspended inside a light wooden crate on tapes that formed a lattice, ensuring that the heavy folds did not fall into creases or touch the sides.

Reams of tissue paper, rolled into light, tight balls, gave the gown a buoyancy inside its framework of criss-crossed tapes.

Two weeks before the opening of New Zealand's Parliament, the Queen's second dresser and the Queen's sewing maid spent three days pressing out the tiny wrinkles in the gown and carefully going over the whole intricate beaded pattern to make certain not a thread had snapped or a bead broken loose.

This careful grooming of the Queen's Coronation gown is typical of the way Her Majesty's Royal tour wardrobe is being kept in perfect condition.

How the Queen manages on the hottest day, with her long tour programme, to remain cool - looking and incredibly dainty is a constant wonder to those who meet her and those of us who are travelling on the Royal tour.

Three busy maids

TRUE, the Queen has her first dresser, Miss Margaret MacDonald, her second dresser, Miss E. MacGregor, and her sewing maid, Miss P. Driscoll, all with nothing else to do but look after her enormous wardrobe.

But the elegance the Queen achieves in a simple and very lovely way, the lasting freshness of her clothes, is not wholly dependent on the services of even the most devoted ladies' maids.

The crisp, cool, unruffled elegance the Queen achieves is the envy of us all.

"Oh, isn't she beautiful," say the teenagers who are just fashion-conscious enough to recognise how the Queen's loveliness is complemented by her pretty clothes as she appears in one charming dress after another.

The Queen clearly put a lot of thought into her Royal tour wardrobe, chooses each day a dress exactly right for the part of the country and the functions on her programme, and then forgets all about her clothes.

"The Queen makes us feel overdressed," said a stout,



THE QUEEN wearing an impeccable outfit during her visit to Hastings, New Zealand. Her graceful, patterned frock is set off by her small white hat, white shoes, and pearls.

fussily dressed wife of a minor official after dropping her curtsy and retiring to glance enviously at the Queen's simple, elegant dress.

It was the white sharkskin two-piece with a tailored, waisted jacket and slightly flaring skirt, worn with a

cherry-red hat and matching handbag.

The peaked crown of the close-fitting hat was just the right note of gaiety for the Queen, who wore this outfit on the proud little gleaming Royal train that took us on

By
ANNE MATHESON,
our Royal tour corres-
pondent in New
Zealand.

a delightful day's "outing" through the country.

That dress showed imagination and was so exactly right for the meetings in the informal settings - the white against the red train, the red hat and bag picking up the color again as the Queen stepped out on to the red-carpeted dais.

A picture in color of the Queen wearing this dress and hat is published on page 21.7

Behind this very simple elegance, however, there is much subtle cut, and the simplicity itself is quite deceptive.

While others have to battle with ballooning skirts in the wind and creases in the heat, the Queen's clothes remain - as the photographs show quite clearly - absolutely immaculate right to the end of the longest day.

Her vendeuse in London told me before we left we would see some beautiful fabrics, and she added, "They are all disciplined."

They are, and a dress that does not hang well and is not easily handled is immediately taken out of the Royal wardrobe.

Troublesome skirt

WE never see it again.

At the evening reception in Jamaica I could not help noticing the pale green paper taffeta dress the Queen wore had such a full, light skirt. It caught up occasionally in her chair, and needed constant patting into place to keep its fullness in order.

I am not surprised the Queen hasn't worn that frock again - although it was a fairy-tale dress and she looked exquisite in it, with its fine tracery of jewels lightly embroidering the bodice and part of the skirt.

The Queen, like any woman in the public eye, cannot have her attention distracted by the details of her dress.

Again and again I have heard the remark, "But the Queen has worn that dress before," or "Why doesn't the Queen wear each dress only once?"

Here again lies part of the secret of the Queen's really good style.

The dress she feels happiest in is the one she will wear over and over again.

One fine silk Aleutian gauze dress, sprigged with tiny carnations, is a perfect example of a favorite frock the Queen wears with or without its jacket and it always looks exactly right.

Continued on page 30



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The author's powerful and quiet style emphasises the ceaseless tension and realism of the action; it is a book to remember.

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AT NAPIER. The Queen, wearing a dress of yellow checked in white, receives Napier's gift, a silver cigarette-case bearing the city's coat of arms, from the Mayor Mr. E. R. Spriggs. All gifts to the Queen are sent aboard Gothic.



ABOVE: At Cambridge. The Queen accepts a bouquet from nine-year-old Bronnie Judith Ford. The Queen wore a pale blue frock checked in white, white accessories, and three-strand pearl necklace.



LEFT: At Whakarewarewa, Rotorua, where Her Majesty wore a patterned pink frock with a bonnet-shaped pink hat and matching veil. The Queen usually wears three-strand pearls with day dresses, but on this occasion she wore a two-strand necklace.



RIGHT: The Queen looked radiant when she visited patients at the Auckland Hospital. This frock is simply designed in white with a tiny black spot and black accessories. Her white hat is one of her favorite eggshell shapes.

AT PATEA. The Queen wore a white sharkskin dressmaker suit and bright cherry red hat when she alighted at "whistle stops." She is seen here talking to the Mayor of Patea, Mr. G. W. T. Corbett.





PICTURES OF THE QUEEN are shown by Mrs. A. E. Rainbow to her 11-year-old daughter, Lynn. With her mother, Lady Fuller, widow of theatrical personality Sir Benjamin Fuller, Mrs. Rainbow will attend the Royal Gala Performance at the Tivoli Theatre on February 6.



PLAYING AT BALMORAL BEACH under mother's eye are the children of Dr. and Mrs. Tom Bateman (from left), Rosalind, Greg, Beatrice Anne, Edmund, and Thomas. They will see the Queen drive to H.M.A.S. Penguin at Balmoral on February 18. Mrs. Bateman will be at the Lord Mayor's Ball at the Town Hall on February 5.

SOCIAL JOTTINGS



WITH streets and buildings donning gala dress and women looking out their long white gloves and practising curtsies, excitement about the Royal tour is snowballing as February 3, the day of the Queen's arrival, approaches.

Government House, Sydney, is the centre of much activity as refurbishing and tidying-up reach their final stages.

Lawns are kept smooth and green, and flower gardens are tended by a team of gardeners. A new addition to the landscape in the grounds is a set of steps being built to ease congestion at the Royal garden party.

For Miss Elizabeth Northcott, daughter of the Governor, Sir John Northcott, this year will be one to remember.

She will be hostess to Her Majesty at Government House, and when her official Royal tour duties are finished she will begin to prepare for her marriage to Squadron-Leader Russell Nash.

HIGHLIGHT of celebrations during the Queen's visit will be the Red Cross Ball at the Trocadero on February 11. Deputy-president of the ball committee, Mrs. Allan Williams, who is taking a large party, has invited the Queen's surgeon, Surgeon-Commander Derek Steele-Perkins, R.N. Committee members hope that other members of the Royal Household will attend.

FOR a grandstand view of the fireworks on the harbor on the night of February 3, Darling Point homes will be hard to beat. Mr. and Mrs. Sam Snider, their son David, and daughter Diana Rose are among the many families who will arrange to watch.



IN CANBERRA. Committee members (front, from left) Lady Holmes, Dame Patti Menzies, Mrs. H. B. Gullott, and Mrs. J. B. Howse and (at back) Mrs. A. D. Campbell, Mrs. H. Jorisson, and Heather Menzies discuss the Elizabethan Ball to be held at the Hotel Canberra on February 13.

AS her personal contribution to the general decoration of Sydney, Mrs. H. A. Showers, wife of Rear-Admiral Showers, is putting a special effort into her garden, which she thinks will be looking lovely by the time Her Majesty arrives. Mrs. Showers will see the Queen on several occasions, including the visit to H.M.A.S. Penguin at Balmoral on February 18.

BACK in town after a Palm Beach holiday, Mrs. Adrian Curlew, wife of Judge Curlew, president of the Surf Life-Saving Association, is also making plans. Judge and Mrs. Curlew will welcome the Royal visitors to the life-saving display at Bondi on February 6. Their son, Ian, will swim at the carnival, and daughter Philippa, who has just returned from six months abroad, will also be there.

RECENT arrivals in Melbourne in the Orion are Lord Bruce, Chancellor of the Australian National University, and Lady Bruce, who have come from England to be present in Canberra during the Queen's visit. Lady Bruce brought with her the white headed gown she wore at the Coronation.

TWO months' travelling with the Royal party lies ahead of Mrs. Eric Harrison, wife of the Minister-in-Charge of the Royal Tour, who has spent three months assembling her wardrobe. She is now quite ready. Mrs. Harrison will see her three married daughters during the tour. Shirley and her husband, Dr. David Walters, are coming to Sydney from Grafton. Joan and her husband, Donald Taylor, are in Adelaide. Judy and husband George Coleman are in Perth.

Anne



MRS. L. A. ROBB, wife of the official secretary at Government House, and daughter Judith will have many opportunities to see the Queen.



MRS. ERIC HARRISON, wife of the Minister-in-Charge of the Royal Tour, rehearses packing evening dresses she will take on her two months' tour with the Royal party.



SARI will be worn by Sargie Chengappa, niece of General K. M. Cariappa, High Commissioner for India, to the diplomatic reception in Canberra on February 15.



GOWN of jewelled white satin by Pierre Balmain is choice of Madame Louis Roche, wife of the French Ambassador, for State Ball in Canberra on February 17.



AT STATE BALL in Canberra, Mrs. Tamail, wife of Dr. M. Tamail, Minister Plenipotentiary for Indonesia, will wear diamonds with her national dress.



MRS. P. H. ROPER and children, Peter, Margaret, and three-year-old Julia, wave as Mr. Roper, State Director of the Royal Tour, leaves for his office. Mrs. Roper will go to the State dinner at David Jones' on February 4.



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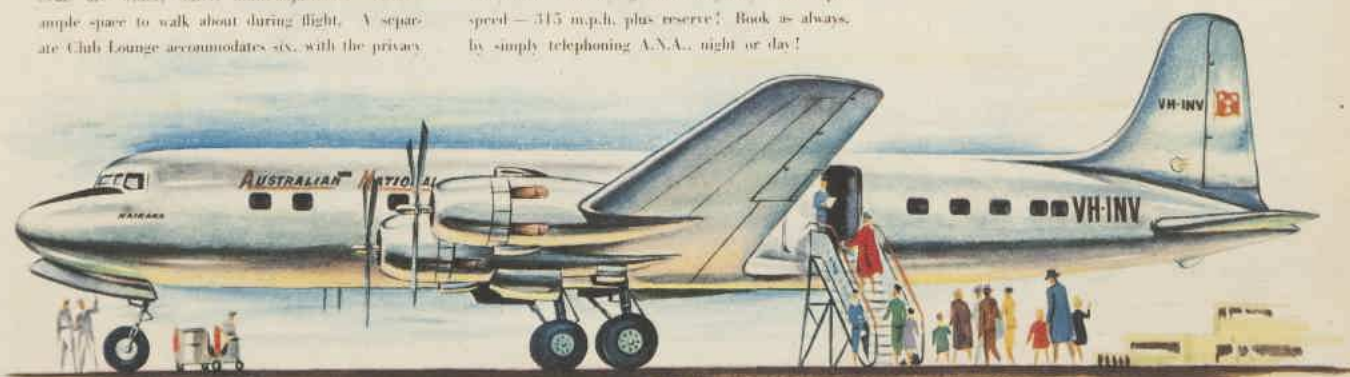
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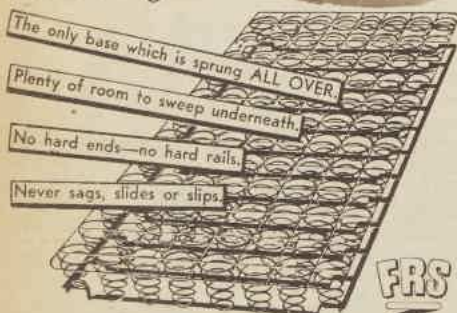
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HARBOR FESTIVAL



WHERE THE QUEEN WILL LAND. This aerial view of Sydney Harbor shows Farm Cove in the foreground with Circular Quay and the city beyond. At 10.30 a.m. on February 3 the Queen and the Duke will disembark at Fleet Steps, shown above at the left side of Farm Cove. Two large stands to seat official guests are now erected close to the steps.

Lovely setting for the Queen's entry into Australia

By SHEILA PATRICK, staff reporter

When the Royal yacht Gothic brings the Queen into Sydney Harbor on the morning of February 3, the harbor will stage the greatest gala it has ever known, as a welcome to the first British reigning monarch to visit Australia.

THOUSANDS of yachts and other small craft will be out on the water early, flying flags, pennants, and all the bunting they can muster, in greeting to Her Majesty.

Thousands of people will crowd on to every vantage point on the foreshores to watch Gothic arrive. Many harborside homes are already decorated with flags, banners, and patriotic emblems to welcome the Queen.

Harborside boatsheds report that all types of boats from 60ft. trawlers to 16ft. rowing-boats and small canoes have been booked up for months.

Ferries have been chartered to take parties of sightseers on the harbor.

Gothic, on her journey from New Zealand, will sight Sydney Heads at dawn and will enter the harbor at 8 a.m. with her escorts of seven warships

of the Royal Australian Navy and 12 planes from No. 22 and No. 23 R.A.A.F. Squadrons.

She will steam slowly up the harbor at less than the regulation 12 knots, so the Queen can view the scene, and will anchor in Athol Bight, west of Bradley's head, at 8.30 a.m.

Peering into the early morning mists, out into the east and the rising sun, Assistant Signalmaster of South Head Signal Station, Jim Thornhill, will be the first person in Australia to see Gothic on the morning of February 3.

Mr. Thornhill, who has been a signalman and associated with pilot stations for 12 years, said Gothic would be flying her code letters "MAUQ" from her foremast yard.

It is the custom of all ships entering port to fly their code letters so they can be identified.

"Not that I'll need the code



ASSISTANT SIGNALMASTER at South Head, Jim Thornhill, will be the first Australian on land to see Gothic as she steams towards the New South Wales coast on February 3.

To greet Monarch



signals to know that it will be our Queen," Mr. Thornhill said grinning. "I'll be waiting for her."

All Sydney people are hoping there'll be a nor-east breeze on the morning of February 3, because it is when the wind is in that direction, especially in the early morning, that the harbor sparkles and glistens and the water is so blue.

After the first sight of the barren sandstone headlands of Sydney Harbor, the Queen will get a pleasant surprise when Gothic enters the harbor and she sees the miles of lovely foreshores indented with beaches and rocky coves, running north, south, and west as far as the eye can see.

The Queen will be getting her first glimpse of one of the most beautiful harbors in the world.

But the Duke knows Sydney well. He visited it several times during the war when he was serving in the Royal Navy, so he is familiar with places of interest round the harbor and will be able to point them out to his wife.

The port of Sydney will be closed from dawn to noon on the day the Queen arrives and no ships will be allowed to enter or leave Port Jackson during that time.

Gothic, painted a glittering white with a deep buff funnel with a black top, will be flying the Royal Standard at the mainmast as she enters Sydney Heads.

When the Queen goes ashore the Royal Standard will be lowered and flown on her barge and the flag of the owners of Gothic, the Shaw Savill Line, will be hoisted in its place.

This company's flag is white with the red cross of St. George in the uppermost corner, on a blue field decorated with white stars.

On her foremast, Gothic will fly the flag of the Lord High Admiral, who is the Queen. This flag has a gold, fouled anchor (an anchor with a piece of rope tangled in it) on a crimson field.

Both the Royal Standard and the Lord High Admiral's flag belong to the reigning monarch and this will be the first time they will be flown in Australia.

Master of Gothic, Captain David Aitchison, is a merchant navy skipper, so his ship, like any other of the merchant fleet, will fly the flag of the British merchant marine at her stern.

Gothic is carrying a cargo which she will discharge at the various ports on her trip round the Australian coast.

As she enters Sydney Harbor, Gothic will probably "dress ship," which means she will carry international code flags from bow to stern over her masts.

Although it is not customary for a ship to "dress" while under way, Gothic, being a Royal Yacht, need observe no precedent and can do as the Queen wishes.

When Gothic entered Suva Harbor, she was flying all her flags.

On the morning of February 3, many parts of the harbor will be closed to private traffic from 7 a.m. until about 11.15 a.m., when the Queen will have disembarked and begun her Royal Progress through the city.

ADMIRAL'S BARGE (left) and a motor-boat from H.M.A.S. Australia, which will escort the Royal barge when it takes the Queen from Gothic to the landing-place in Farm Cove.

Probably the most picturesque sight on the harbor will be the laneway of welcome, or guard of honor, formed by yachts and launches, flying their yacht club pennants, house and code flags and all the bunting they have in their lockers.

Three hundred and seventy yachts and launches, big and small, will make the laneway, reaching from Fort Denison to Farm Cove.

At 10.20 a.m. the Queen will embark in the Royal barge and will travel along the laneway of boats to Fleet Steps, on the eastern side of Farm Cove, where she will disembark for her official welcome and Royal Progress through the city.

As the Royal barge passes along the line, all boats carrying an ensign will dip it (haul it down and up again) when the Queen, her Royal Standard fluttering most high, goes by.

The reigning monarch of the British Commonwealth dips her Royal Standard to no one.

Boats and launches not included in the laneway of welcome will be able to anchor in all the bays and waters surrounding the closed areas, and have been asked to dress ship.

There will be a brief lull in the harbor gala. Early in the afternoon, sightseers will gather again on the foreshores and small boats take up positions once more for the fireworks display that will end the greatest day in Sydney's history.



CODE FLAGS are checked by Mr. D'Ayer Shelley in his yacht Jane K. He is assisted by his grandson, Edgell Bush. Jane K. will take part in the yachts' laneway of welcome.

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Nothing could be finer for your baby or for you. SOLYPTOL Baby Powder is soft and silky... and you'll like its fragrant perfume!

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OSMAN Towels

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IDEAL AFTER-SWIM WEAR

—Bright and gay beach wraps
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Whether you want white towels or coloured, patterned or striped or plain, bath towels, guest towels, or in-between sizes—whatever sort of towel you're looking for, you can't do better than buy the famous Osman make.

All Osman towels have one thing in common — quality. This makes them wonderfully absorbent. They are as colourful in the house as on the beach and are easy to dry with—and easy to buy.



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Your most effective deodorant for checking perspiration and its offending odour. Because only Odo-Ro-No has this new "Action-Proof" formula! Vastly superior to anything you've ever seen before! Use Odo-Ro-No daily and be confident of complete 24-hour protection—no matter how active you are!



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POSITIVELY
Most Effective!

What's a girl to DO?

She tries everything that comes in pots, tubes and what-have-you's. She swaps her soaps, changes her creams, labours with lotions. Yet when she wakes o'morning her complexion still has the dull, muddy look. And the reason? She doesn't know that greasy skin foods are fantastically out of date.

She certainly doesn't know that Mercorized Wax nourishes and cleanses the skin—that it goes deep, deep down, gently dissolving the imperceptible particles of dried skin that clog the pores and deglamourise the complexion.

Overnight, Mercorized Wax would make her skin fresh, clear and glowing with health. Overnight, this non-greasy, instant-vanishing cream would work for her, achieving the miracle of a flawlessly lovely complexion. Mercorized Wax, used by the world's most alluring women, costs only 4/6. Every chemist has it.

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Are you embarrassed by too frequent urination during the day and night? These symptoms, as well as Bladder Irritation, Backache, Swollen Ankles, Leg Pains, Nervousness, Discomfort, Lumbago, Broken Sleep, Circles Under Eyes are usually due to germ-caused kidney and bladder troubles. The first dose of Cystex, the new scientific medicine, goes right to work averting troubles in 3 days. 3. Kills germs causing trouble. 2. Gets rid of poisonous acids. 3. Strengthens and rejuvenates kidney and bladder. Get Cystex from chemist to-day under guarantee satisfaction or money back.

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Don't let coughing, wheezing attacks of Asthma and Bronchitis poison your life. Get your energy, run your back and wake your heart. Medoan, a new American scientific medicine, starts immediately to eliminate through the blood, quickly during the attack. The very first day the chest begins to disengage, giving free, easy breathing and letting sleep the night through to you. Get Medoan from your chemist or store today under positive guarantee to stop your Asthma, wheezing and to give you free, easy breathing the first day or money back.

THE AUSTRALIAN WOMEN'S WEEKLY - JANUARY 27, 1954

MOTHER



"I can't hear a word you say. Ring back later, dear—after the holidays are over!"

HIS SECRET



"After all, father, you have to respect a man who can stay alive on Herbert's salary!"

It seems to me

IN newspaper offices the news of the rest of the world is beginning to recede as the Royal visit looms larger and larger.

The stacks of working plans, itineraries, and flight plans issued by the Commonwealth Royal Visit Staff grow higher and higher. February 3, which has been christened Q-day in this office, gets closer.

Its problems range from who will be assigned at what points along the route to how the rest of the staff can reach the office by 7 a.m. before the streets become impassable.

Tour organisers are aware that it is through the Press, the radio, and the newsreels that many thousands of people will see the Queen at second hand.

Consequently, for this tour they are providing elaborate facilities for the Press of Australia and overseas. About 95 Press, radio, and newsreel men and women will travel round Australia. Many more will be accredited in each State.

On the shoulders of Mr. Oliver Hogue, Commonwealth Public Relations Officer of the Commonwealth Royal Visit Staff, falls the main burden of co-ordinating the Press cover. Mr. Hogue, incidentally, deserves a special medal for calmness in the face of continual harassment.

LAST week I spent a few hours at Victoria Barracks in the offices of the Commonwealth Royal Visit Staff.

For some of them February 3 will be a day for which they began to prepare when the first plans were made for a visit by the late King George VI in 1949.

Lieut.-General F. H. Berryman, who, as Director-General, is responsible to the Minister-in-Charge, Mr. Eric Harrison, was appointed then.

The phones in the Commonwealth and State Royal Visit offices must be the busiest in Australia. At the Barracks every interview I had was punctuated by phone calls.

People who, at this late stage, suggest alterations in the programme might be less vocal if they realised the organisation involved. Even the paper work is intimidating. Mountains of it. And every sheet of it necessary.

FOR months hundreds of letters have poured into the Royal Visit offices. Some of the requests are reasonable. They are passed on to the right quarter.

For instance, one letter from a father whose child was not expected to live long was answered within a few days by the State Director, who found a place for the child to see the Royal Progress from a stand set aside for crippled children.

Other letters are perhaps best exemplified by that of the elderly gentleman who related how he had written to the Royal Family giving them advice for years. So, he said, had his father and his grandfather.

The Royal Family, including Queen Victoria, had always taken his advice, he claimed.

Therefore he wished to be appointed as a special adviser for the tour. Failing that, could a prominent position near the Queen be arranged for him on all official occasions?



Dorothy Drann

IF anything goes wrong it won't be due to lack of attention to detail. Organisers have tried to foresee everything foreseeable and to control everything controllable.

One thing is beyond their control. That is the weather. The Queen is scheduled to fly 10,000 miles in Australia. Bad weather could play havoc with plans.

When, in talking to the Commonwealth Air Transport Officer, Group-Captain E. B. Courtney, I used the word "safety," he very quickly corrected me.

"The question of safety doesn't arise," he said. "We will take no risks whatever. But there is another important factor. That is the Queen's comfort."

"Flying, like all methods of transport, imposes some nervous strain on most people. It may not be obvious. Nevertheless, everybody who has flown knows it."

"If a commercial plane has a rough trip, any passenger disturbed by it can recover at his leisure."

"The Queen hasn't time to do that. She has to step straight from the plane to be greeted, to go straight on to her next engagement."

"If the pre-flight check shows that severe turbulence is likely, Her Majesty's staff will be informed. Though it is unlikely that a trip will have to be abandoned for this reason, it might be necessary perhaps to increase flying time to avoid severe conditions."

AIR organisation for the tour is tremendously complex. As well as the Royal plane and the Royal stand-by plane, a great number of aircraft will carry officials, members of the Royal staff, baggage, and Press.

Between 10,000lb. and 15,000lb. of baggage belonging to the Royal party and staff has to be moved between cities. There will be some baggage which cannot leave until after the Queen and must arrive before her.

This, incidentally, is one of the reasons why the Queen needs such a large wardrobe.

From day to day and from hour to hour the weather information will be vital. The weather may be suitable for departure at, say, 10 a.m. Will it be right for landing in the evening?

An ordinary passenger plane can be diverted to another airport at a minute's notice. Picture the complications if the Royal plane had to be diverted!

PERHAPS, in spite of carefully laid plans, some unrehearsed incidents will occur. But it is not likely that anyone will be able to emulate the two soldiers' wives of Albany, W.A., during the visit of the then Duke of York, later King George V, in 1901.

Lieut.-Colonel Ian Hunter, Executive Officer and Commonwealth Marshal, told me the story. The Duke's ship, the Ophir, was suddenly diverted to Albany instead of Fremantle. The soldiers of the Albany fort were at Fremantle.

At Albany the master-gunner's wife looked out of her window and saw the Royal ship approaching. She rushed off to consult another gunner's wife. They looked up the regulations and found the ship should have a 21-gun salute.

So the two ladies manned the guns themselves and fired the salute.

Pocket Steak - with a flavour lift



... add new interest to a family favourite.

1 lb. topside, round or rump steak, 2" thick; ¼ cup soft breadcrumbs; 1 onion, grated (2 tablespoons); small pinch of salt; 1 dessertspoon Bonox mixed with 2 tablespoons hot water; 1 dessertspoon butter or dripping; ½ teaspoon mixed herbs; dripping for roasting; Bonox gravy.

With a sharp knife cut a pocket in the steak. Put the breadcrumbs, herbs, and grated onion into a bowl. Dissolve the Bonox in the hot water and add the butter or dripping, and pinch of salt. Pour this over the breadcrumbs, etc., and mix well together. Stuff the steak with this mixture and skewer or sew the opening. Place in a baking pan with dripping, cover with greased paper and cook in a slow oven (350°) for about 50 minutes or until tender. Bake vegetables with the meat. Serve with Bonox gravy. Pocket steak is equally delicious cold.

A COLD MEAT TREAT

4 level teaspoons gelatine, ½ cup cold water, 1¼ cups hot water, 4 teaspoons Bonox, 1 teaspoon grated onion, ¼ teaspoon salt, ¼ teaspoon Worcestershire Sauce, pepper, 1 cup diced left-over meat, ½ cup cooked vegetables, ½ cup diced celery, 1 hard-boiled egg, Kraft Mayonnaise.

Soften gelatine in cold water. Add hot water, Bonox, salt, pepper and stir until dissolved. Add Worcestershire sauce, grated onion and chill until mixture is thickened but not set. Stir in meat, cooked vegetables, celery. Arrange slices of hard-boiled egg, in a layer of jelly, on the bottom and sides of a loaf pan or in individual moulds. Pour on rest of mixture and chill until firm. Unmould and garnish with lettuce and tomatoes. Serve with Kraft Mayonnaise. 4 to 5 generous serves. Use Bonox as a Sauce for Cold Meats. 1 teaspoon Bonox; 2 teaspoons tomato sauce; a little Kraft prepared mustard and a dash of Worcestershire sauce. Blend together and serve on cold meats.

Give all meat dishes a flavour lift with BONOX



Keep Bonox handy in your kitchen. Spread it on roasts and steaks... add it to soups, stews and gravies. Bonox adds the concentrated goodness of rich prime beef to all your cooking. Available everywhere in 2, 4, 8, 16 and 28 oz. jars. Eat it and drink it for a lift! KB416

NEW

COOKERY BOOK for

CURRENTS
RAISINS
SULTANAS

Did you apply for a copy of "Family Fare," the new cookery book for Sun-dried Currants, Raisins and Seeded Raisins? If you did so, but haven't yet received it, your copy will be in the mail to you any day now.

Huge demand by Australian housewives for this outstanding collection of recipes has caused some delay in despatch, but all requests will be satisfied. And if you haven't yet sent for "Family Fare," just forward a 3/4 stamp, with your name and address, to:



THE AUSTRALIAN DRIED FRUITS ASSOCIATION
BOX 4524, MELBOURNE, VIC. 31, 4, W.W.12/52

OFFICIAL HOSTS TO HER MAJESTY



● Photographed here are the Governor-General, the State Governors, and the Lord Mayors who will have the duty and pleasure of entertaining Queen Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh.



GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA, Sir Ronald Cross, with Lady Cross (seated) and two of her daughters, Susanna (left) and Karina, and their dachshund, Bruni. The Queen will stay at Government House.



GOVERNOR OF QUEENSLAND, Sir John Lavarack, and Lady Lavarack in the room which the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh will use as a private sitting-room after they arrive in Brisbane by air on March 9.



LEFT: The Lord Mayor of Hobart, Tasmania, Sir Richard O. Harris, and the Lady Mayoress, Lady Harris, at the Town Hall.

ABOVE: The Lord Mayor of Adelaide, Mr. Arthur Rymill, photographed in his full robes, with Lady Mayoress Mrs. Rymill.



BRISBANE'S LORD MAYOR, Alderman Frank Roberts, and the Lady Mayoress, Mrs. Roberts, who will receive at the Lord Mayor's Ball in the City Hall on March 10.



MELBOURNE'S LORD MAYOR, Councillor Robert Solly, and Mrs. Solly, who will be host and hostess at the Lord Mayor and City Councillors' Ball on Tuesday, March 2. The Queen and Duke will arrive at the ball at 9.30 p.m.



PERTH'S LORD MAYOR, Mr. James Murray, in his robes of office, with the Lady Mayoress, Mrs. Murray. Mr. Murray took office in December. He and the Mayoress will receive at the Mayoral Ball at Government House Ballroom on March 30.



GOVERNOR-GENERAL, Field-Marshal Sir William Slim, who will welcome Her Majesty to Australia, with Lady Slim and her wire-haired fox terrier, Susie, in the lounge at Admiralty House, Sydney. The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh will be house-guests of Sir William and Lady Slim at Government House, Canberra, for their five-day stay.



GOVERNOR OF VICTORIA, Sir Dallas Brooks, and Lady Brooks, who will entertain the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh at Government House, Melbourne, during their visit to Victoria. Lady Brooks is noted for her charm.



GOVERNOR OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA, Air Vice-Marshal Sir Robert George, with Lady George in the drawing-room at Government House, Adelaide. The Queen will hold an investiture at Government House on Wednesday, March 24.



GOVERNOR OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA, Sir Charles Gairdner, and his wife, the Honorable Lady Gairdner, with whom the Royal couple will stay in Perth. They will sail in Gothic on the homeward journey on April 1.



LEFT: Lord Mayor of Sydney, Alderman P. D. Hills, and Mrs. Hills, who will receive the guests at a Town Hall ball on February 5. SQUADRON - Leader Nash.



'LONDON PRIDE'

Created by Berlei designers to mark a memorable occasion, "London Pride" is our tribute to lovely women. Sophisticated, the way it defines your waist, moulds your bust and hips. So elegant, so light and lovely in nylon-elastic net. Cosmopolitan colours are Mayfair White, Pall Mall Pink and Berkeley Black.

Sizes are 28", 30", 32", 34" and 36".

Five Guineas.

BY

Berlei



Continued from page 19

THE QUEEN'S WARDROBE

IN Tonga, the Queen had a very varied Sunday. From church she went with Queen Salote on an informal and gay picnic at Queen Salote's country estate at Kauvai.

After the picnic the formal and touching farewell to Queen Salote and the island of Tonga was said at the jetty, the Queen still looking dainty and very lovely in her pretty summer silk.

This same frock the Queen wore in New Zealand on a day when she toured a dairy factory at New Plymouth, responded to the cheering crowds at Stratford and flew to the capital city of Wellington, where 20,000 people were waiting to greet her arrival.

In New Zealand the weather was cooler and the Queen wore the dress with its matching jacket.

As it got even colder the Queen covered her frock with a light pinky-beige coat of classic cut with not a vestige of over-trimming.

The fine silk gauze dress looked perfect in the sizzling heat of Tonga.

The same silk gauze, more formalised with its tailored jacket, looked just as perfect in New Zealand.

The Queen wears only her three-strand necklace of pearls and pearl earrings with this ensemble.

Hems are weighted

SIMPLE, however, as this summery silk frock looks, it would surprise most people to know just how complicated it is in "structure."

The hemline is weighted with the tiniest weights—hardly more than atoms of lead. This is another of the Queen's wardrobe secrets.

For day wear the Queen favors full, fluttering skirts for the tropics and the long, warm days in New Zealand.

The skirts of her dresses are usually flared and pleated into a narrow belted waist, flattering her slim waistline, or they are slightly gored, falling in a bell shape.

Yet even "windy Wellington" didn't flutter a hemline.

All the hemlines are well weighted or stiffened in these full yet formalised skirts.

As the tour moves from the open country, where light silks or cottons are so right, to the big cities, where dressing is so much more formal, the Queen's dressers put out the Royal tour clothes designed for these occasions.

And again the planning and thought put into the wardrobe is evident.

For example, the Queen looked really beautiful as she arrived at St. Paul's Cathedral, Wellington, in the pouring rain.

The Queen wore a slate-blue faille fitted coat, the bell skirt giving the coat a formalised fullness.

With this tailored coat she wore a matching hat and, because it was a rainy day, her largest and loveliest diamond brooch, that sparkled in the wet and lifted the whole ensemble.

It was another example of her unerring taste in the choice of jewels.

She knows exactly when to

wear a magnificent piece of jewellery and when her three strands of pearls and pearl earrings will be all that is needed to complete her ensemble.

The Queen is wearing some very unusual colors on this tour.

Often she is the most simply dressed woman in sight during the day but, at night, her fabulous gowns are dazzling.

There is the stately gown of aquamarine satin she wore at her first investiture in Auckland; the billowing crinoline chosen for her Christmas broadcast; the shimmering ice-blue gown encrusted with exquisite pearl embroidery, which she wore at the fiesta in Hamilton; and the dream dresses in finely spun lace and in tulle in which she appeared on tropical nights in the Pacific islands.

Additional glamor is added to these fairy-tale dresses by the flashing of diamonds from her tiara and necklace.

The simple understatement of the Queen's day clothes is completely reversed in the evening when every dress is a glamorous compliment to the evening function at which she wears it.

It is when one sees these magnificent creations that the necessity for two dressers and a sewing maid becomes very obvious.

Like any other woman, the Queen does not decide what she will wear until just before she begins to dress for the event.

There are 100 dresses in her tour wardrobe, and they are not all unpacked and ready at the same time.

But there are always several trunkloads of clothes hanging in the Queen's dressing-room.

Miss MacDonald, who knows the Queen's taste and can anticipate fairly accurately the dress she will wear, still has to have at least half a dozen evening gowns pressed and ready for her, and each dress must have its accessories at hand.

Arriving at a hotel or even at Government House, Miss MacDonald's concern is to see that there is a good dressing-room and plenty of wardrobe space for the Queen's clothes.

Even on the Royal train there is a small ironing-room.

The ever-watchful "Bobo," as the Queen calls her devoted maid, keeps her eye on the Queen to see that her hemline has not dipped or a sleeve wrinkled.

As we move about the country, Miss MacDonald—herself a model of neatness and good dressing—can be seen looking through the train window or watching from the window of a hotel for the Queen's arrival.

She is keeping her practical eye on the Queen's dresses, ready to have any adjustment made the moment the Queen has changed for the next function.

Miss MacDonald has the most detailed knowledge of the geography of each country.

The terrain is her special study, because she plans well ahead for the Queen.

She makes it her business to find out where the roads are rough and where grassy,

where orderly red carpets and a formal dais will be on the Queen's programme.

This is a most important part of the work of the Queen's dresser, for she must advise the Queen what shoes to wear, and have them ready.

That is why the Queen of England is never seen tottering in high heels over a paddock to inspect, perhaps, horses or cattle, nor does she slip uncomfortably over such wet surfaces as the floor of the stalactite cave at Waitomo.

Miss MacDonald knows what the country will be like, anticipates what the Queen will be doing and which of the many pairs of shoes in her wardrobe should be ready.

Sling-backs, p e e p toes, wedge heels, many of the style points of the Queen's shoes which do not always measure up to the tailored lines or well balanced fullness of her clothes, have all been chosen and worn because they are suitable to the occasion.

In footwear the Queen cannot sacrifice comfort. Her shoes play an important part in ensuring that she has the poise and ease essential at each different function in her long and busy day.

Comfortable shoes help her to go through her day without overtaxing her strength.

Occasionally one feels that those who admire the Queen's simple elegance in clothes are not wholly satisfied with her shoes.

But weighing the advantage of cool, comfortable shoes against over-dressy footwear, the Queen's choice wins every time.

As the Royal tour reaches Australia, many of the tropical dresses and light summery clothes for country trips are to be packed away, and the Queen's Australian wardrobe will be brought from the "Not wanted in the cabin" holds of the Royal yacht Gothic.

In Australia the Queen will be wearing some very smart and more formal dresses as well as the easy, full-skirted dresses that have been such a success in the Pacific islands and New Zealand.

In addition to the Coronation dress for the opening of Federal Parliament in Canberra, the Queen has a beautiful dress she may wear to the opening of State Parliaments.

Bouquet at waist

THIS is a white silk gauze-like tussore, with tiny sleeves (because she will be wearing it during the day), a decollete, cross-over bodice, rather straight skirt with fullness sweeping to the left side, and a bouquet of white lilies and sweetpeas pinned in the tailored belt.

Among other dresses the Queen will wear in Australia are several of lace. One of cream lace is in a flower pattern mounted on satin, the fullness of the skirt springing out from below the hipline—a new silhouette for the Queen.

Another lace gown is patterned in thistles and Tudor roses on white satin, embroidered all over the fabric.

Many of the more tailored dresses in the tour wardrobe will be worn in Australia.



At a time like this

your hands must stay lovely with

CUTEX

Nail Brilliance with "Enamelon"

Beautiful women all over the world depend
on "Cutex" nail brilliance

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In London, scene of so many functions
of regal magnificence, fashionable debutantes
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The scene has moved from London now, and
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will keep them that way. These royal
shades will crown your fingertips and stay
sparkling — brilliant, glamorous — "Cutex"
Regal Red and Pink Sceptre.

Using Cane-ite we got
the most out of a
small room for
two big boys



**DADS! You can build
this colourful, com-
fortable all-boy room
in a few week-ends.**

Three practical C.S.R. building materials are used in this room. The walls and ceilings are of Cane-ite — the only building board that insulates as it decorates — which keeps the room **WARMER** in Winter, **COOLER** in Summer. That means a better place to sleep, play and study in all year 'round. Choose from three finishes (1) Natural, (2) Primed, (3) Pre-finished Ivory — best for ceilings because of the wonderful way it reflects light. Cane-ite comes in time-saving, easy-to-handle sheet sizes: 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12 feet lengths — available in 3 and 4 feet widths to fit all wall spaces with next-to-no-carpentry.

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CANE-ITE

Insulates as it decorates

Manufactured by **THE COLONIAL SUGAR REFINING CO. LTD.**
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The study table and other built-ins any handyman can make, using Timbrock. It is natural wood made better. Stronger, flexible, splinterless, grainless, easy to work. White ant proofed.
The floor is of laid-to-your-own design C.S.R. Floor Tiles available in 17 colours. Resilient, easily cleaned.

KEEPS OUT THE HEAT



KEEPS OUT THE COLD

Flowers for a Royal Lady



TO every little Australian girl who dreams of a magic world peopled by lovely princesses, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II is like a fairy-tale Queen come to life.

In the imaginative minds of children, her grace and charm, her breathtaking gowns, and her happy-ever-after marriage to the Prince Charming endow the young Sovereign with all the qualities of a Hans Andersen heroine.

Now, on the occasion of Her Majesty's visit to Australia, a number of little girls are to have the honor of meeting their Queen and presenting her with floral tributes.

Those chosen to offer bouquets will represent other Australian children in their districts.

On these pages are pictures of some of the lucky little girls who will give flowers to the Queen. For each of them it will be a wonderful moment — a moment they will remember and cherish for the rest of their lives.



DIANA KNOX will present a bouquet to the Queen at the Princess Theatre, Melbourne. Diana is the granddaughter of President of the National Theatre, Sir Robert Knox.



THE QUEEN will accept flowers from Carol Anderson (left) and Betty Ann Smith at Toowoomba, where she will be welcomed by about 10,000 children. Carol is the daughter of the Mayor of Toowoomba, and Betty Ann's mother is a Legacy widow.

THE AUSTRALIAN WOMEN'S WEEKLY — January 27, 1954



HELEN BEAUMONT, daughter of the Curator of the Botanical Gardens, Ballarat, Victoria, will present Her Majesty with a bunch of begonias. Helen is aged seven.



ROYAL CURTSY. Jili Samson, of Fremantle, W.A., shows how she will offer the Queen the bouquet of roses which will be taken aboard Gothic when Her Majesty leaves W.A.



ABOVE: Ruth Trigg, aged six, granddaughter of the Mayor of Port Lincoln, S.A., will wear a special white Legacy tunic when she gives flowers to the Queen.



PRUDENCE KERR, aged seven, of Launceston, Tasmania, who has been chosen to present flowers to Her Majesty, attends Trevallyn State School. Her mother is a war widow.



PROUDEST GIRL in Victoria is Anne, of St. Agnes' Home, Glenroy, who was chosen by the Mayoress of Essendon, Mrs. R. S. Mott, to make a floral presentation to the Queen.



RIGHT: Maureen Gordon, of Newcastle, a Legacy ward, will wear a special white Legacy tunic when she gives the Queen a bouquet.

Mother!
you can trust



LAXETTES



For forty years Mothers have relied on chocolate Laxettes for constipation, liverishness, sick feeling and tummy upsets. Laxettes are the one laxative that's good for all the family — young children, adults, even invalids. Each delicious chocolate square contains an exact dose of the wonderful, tasteless laxative phenolphthalein, which acts in 6 to 8 hours, without pain or griping.

Give the chocolate laxative children never try to dodge.

Children love Laxettes, and take them whenever needed, as happily as chocolates ... no tears or fuss, no spills or spitting out! It's easy for Mother to regulate the dosage of Laxettes, and they're harmless even if an overdose is accidentally taken. Keep your family well with gentle, effective, not-habit-forming Laxettes.

"A LAXETTE AT NIGHT —
IN THE MORNING FEEL BRIGHT."

2/6 per packet,

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GET LAXETTES FOR
THE FAMILY MEDICINE
CUPBOARD TODAY!



Be
artful
with
Mustard!



SO TASTY TO THE TONGUE

Try this delicious way of making the best of roast beef! Before cooking, rub a teaspoon of Mustard into the roast. It makes such a zestful difference! The same bright thought applies equally well if you're grilling or frying a steak. When you cook the Mustard flavour in, it makes the meat so enticing. Keen's Mustard, naturally!



AFTER FISHY GOINGS-ON

When washing the dishes after serving fish, add a little Mustard to the water to cut that clinging odour.

KEEN'S
MUSTARD
.. of course



Harmony in Colour

The most comprehensive range of fine instruments priced within reach of every family. Recognised for their dependability, performance and sound value, A.W.A. Radiola — the most wanted — most owned — most proven broadcast receiver.



Radiolagram 552GA

RADIOLAGRAMS

Radiolagram 552GA. A new design with decided appeal to suit all appointments, with perfectly matching veneers—magnetic door catches, precision balanced smooth acting lid and fitted with the 3-speed automatic record changer. 116 gns.

Radiolagram 550GA. The acme in cabinet artistry with attractive and perfectly matched veneers, fitted with amazing and exclusive "Twin Jewel" pick-up, that provides broadcasting studio quality of reproduction in the home. It is truly an instrument of rare distinction. Fitted with 3-speed automatic record changer. 147 gns.

Radiolagram 551GA. The portable "Leisuregram" provides entertainment from either radio or records when and where you want it. Is very robustly constructed and fitted with a 3-speed player. 56 gns.



Radiolagram 550GA



Radiolagram 551GA



RADIOLA

Radiola 539MA. 5-valve mantel radio built by engineer craftsmen of A.W.A. to give you perfect listening and longer range. Glorious tone and powerful reception from stations near and far. £26/15/6.

Radiola 540MA. 5-valve, dual-wave mantel model incorporates medium and short wave long distance reception. £30/19/6.



RADIOLA

New champion 449MA

Radiola 449MA. Australia's most popular mantel radio. A new beauty that reflects the quality within. Superb styling—magic tone realism—matchless reliability and value. A champion radio in every respect. £22/17/6.



546P

RADIOLA PORTABLES

Radiola 546P. 5-valve, dual-wave battery operated portable. Very robustly constructed. Light in weight, this portable is truly outstanding. £45/8/9.

Radiola 555P. 5-valve electric/battery portable with proven "reactivation." Use it around the house from the electric power supply or out of doors from its batteries any time, anywhere. In tone range and appearance this Radiola is outstanding. Full scale dial with stations marked makes tuning easy. Battery reactivation increases the life of the batteries appreciably. £32/2/6.

Radiola 553P 6-valve, electric/battery portable. Has features of model 555P and one extra valve £36/15/1.



457P/559P
555P/653P

Radiola 457P. The most popular all-battery operated 4-valve portable. Full scale dial with stations marked makes tuning easy. £24/12/5.

Radiola 559P. Similar to the popular model 457P but with extra valve, giving exceptional range. £28/13/1.

All portable models, are fitted with the exclusive moulded carrying handle that fits your hand.

CAR RADIO



A.W.A. Clock Radio 461M. This latest A.W.A. achievement offers you something 'New' in radio.

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Worth Reporting

A BIBLE and prayer-book which were brought to Australia by the colony's first chaplain, the Rev. Richard Johnson, in 1788, will be used by the Queen when she attends morning prayer at St. Andrew's Cathedral, Sydney, on February 7.

Both are signed by Edward, Prince of Wales, Albert (the Queen's father), and Henry, Duke of Gloucester. It is hoped that the Queen, too, will sign the books.

Though the Bible and prayerbook have been rebound, squares from the original covering have been stuck down upon the title page. Gold lettering upon a brown leather ground reads: "Botany Bay."

The books belong to historic St. Philip's, Church Hill, where, on the day that the Queen lands in Sydney, Mr. Jack Blissett and a team of men will sound welcoming chimes upon the ten bells.

Mr. Blissett, whose title is Captain of the Tower, calls the chimes to be rung. We were in the bellchamber one evening and watched as the team obeyed his calls of "Round we go!" "Tittums!" and "Queens!"

Long ropes, ending in red-white-and-blue velvet-covered "sallies," were pulled, working the clappers of the bells, which weigh, all told, 96cwt. 3qrs. 1lb.

"We chime, we don't ring," explained Mr. Blissett, who has performed this duty since 1916. "When the Queen comes we'll be playing appropriate music on the bells and will end with 'God Save the Queen.'"

In Melbourne on the afternoon of Sunday, February 28, the bell ringers of St. Paul's Cathedral will attempt to ring a complete peal—lasting more than three hours—to celebrate the visit of the Queen and the Duke to the cathedral earlier in the day.

In the history of the cathedral only nine other complete peals have been rung.

Woodman, don't spare that tree!

MR. C. S. GARTH, head of the Parks and Gardens Division of the City of Sydney, reports that one of his jobs has been to see that each tree along the Royal Route is sound and strong enough to bear the weight of any nimble-climbed citizen who may shin up it to see the Queen pass by.

Many trees which would have been good for years have been lopped or removed because they might not stand the strain of people climbing in them.

One big tree in Bridge Street was eaten out with white ants. Although it looked sound, it would have been a hazard to people packed below it.

Mr. Garth said that loose or dead branches which might have been brought down by a sudden wind have also been lopped.

"This is out of our routine jobs," he explained, "but we are taking extra precautions this year."

DANCING under the stars at the University of Western Australia will be an unusual experience for the Queen and her husband on the night of March 30. A special floor will be laid down over the velvety lawns of Whitfield Court, where, during the university year, students sit and study.

Timber for the floor is now being seasoned in the suburban yard of a Perth sawmiller. The measurements will be 110 feet by 60 feet; it will be ten inches from the ground.

After its one-night use, two-thirds of the floor is to replace the present Leederville Town Hall flooring, and the remaining third will repair flooring at Perth Town Hall.

There's a Royal hotel

SPARING time between choosing curtains for the Queen's bedroom and china for the Royal meals, Mrs. Frank Tengstrom, of the Hotel Gollan, Lismore, came to tell us about the decorations for the suite of rooms which the Queen and her retinue will occupy on their overnight stay in this North Coast town of N.S.W.

"I've found the right material for curtains," she said. "It's pure Italian silk



damask, striped champagne and lilac, matching the lilac ceiling, walls, and bedcover in the Queen's bedroom. The furniture is blond wood, and the carpet is a soft cyclamen patterned with buff orchids."

Mrs. Tengstrom produced a silver fork from her handbag and passed it over to us.

"That's part of the set," she explained. "The Queen and Duke will eat their meals in a private dining-room, where there's a rectangular table to seat eight."

"The walls and ceiling are bluey-green, the curtains are champagne-colored with a small green spot, and the furniture is blond wood again."

Mrs. Tengstrom checked a list from her handbag.

"I think everything's covered," she said, ticking it off. "Dinner service, crystal glasses, breakfast set, knives ..."

"How about finger bowls?" we asked.

"They're the only things we're not providing," said Mrs. Tengstrom, going at a fast pace out of the office and back to Lismore.

STICKY little bush flies could prove a menace to the Royal party during their visit to Canberra.

All gardens, parklands, as well as buildings used by the Queen or along the route of the Royal Progress will be sprayed, and troops' clothing will be treated before ceremonial parades.

Tribute in three dimensions

A "THREE-DIMENSIONAL" picture of the Queen, the Duke of Edinburgh, and Prince Charles is drawing crowds outside a Melbourne shop.

The picture, which measures three feet by two feet six inches, is mounted on an electrically operated turntable.

As it turns to the left, the Duke's portrait appears, but fades into a color portrait of the Queen when the frame faces the front. As it revolves to the right, the Queen's picture merges into one of the little prince.

The "fading" process and an illusion of three dimensions were devised by young Melbourne business man Mr. John Latham, who, with his partner, Juri Iwanov, "burnt the midnight oil" for months to perfect the process before the Royal tour.

Mr. Latham told us the Queen's portrait was drawn on silk from a studio portrait.

The Duke's picture was then cut into a number of fine strips, which were rearranged so that the other two pictures could be seen through them on an angle of 51 degrees.

"They are seen as if through louvers, or slats in a vertical venetian blind," he explained.

The inventors have patented the process, and several more "3-D" pictures will be displayed during the Royal visit.

THE Countrywomen's Association at Mt. Isa, Queensland, has a bright idea to enable members and their friends to travel 603 miles to Townsville at a reasonable cost to see the Queen on March 12. It has "bought" a train. There will be no sleepers on it, despite the distance to be travelled.

This was a unanimous decision, because without sleepers more people can travel. The joy of seeing the Queen will more than compensate for an uncomfortable night on the forward and return journeys.

Her smile is an inspiration

FROM Fiji comes a letter, written by an Australian missionary, the Rev. A. R. Tippet, who was privileged to shake the Queen's hand when she visited the cathedral there.

"I know it was a very great honor to meet Her Majesty, yet it wasn't just that which gave me the thrill when she put out her hand for me to take. And I'm trying to make up my mind just what it was," he wrote.

"You see, a long time ago, when it became apparent that Elizabeth would be our Queen some day, I began to make a special corner for her in my heart and in my prayers."

"She looks right into your face as she shakes your hand, and I can honestly say that to stand before her and have her smile at you is more than an honor, it's an inspiration."

"And it was all the more lovely for being in the House of God. My Queen! I shall go on praying for you."

STELL-RICKS

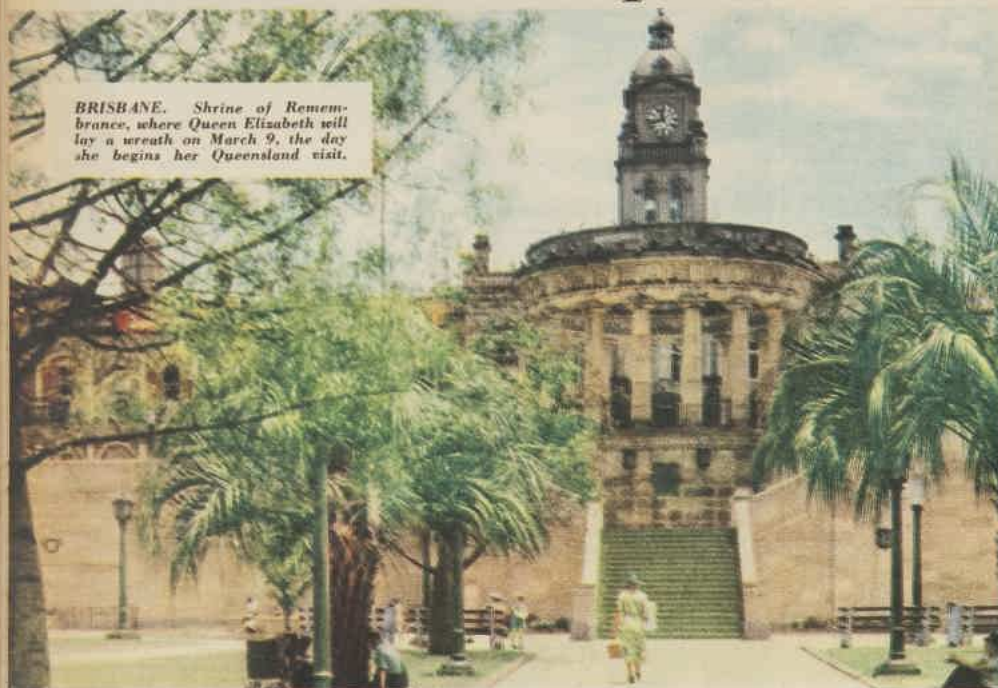


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AT ALL THE BETTER

STORES & SALONS THROUGHOUT AUSTRALIA

AUSTRALIA: A panorama for the Queen



BRISBANE. Shrine of Remembrance, where Queen Elizabeth will lay a wreath on March 9, the day she begins her Queensland visit.

During their eight weeks' visit to Australia Queen Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh will see all the major cities, many big country centres, and some small bush towns.



They will inspect rural and secondary industries and see a variety of scenery, from fertile valleys to lonely outback plains. In the north they will experience the brilliance and warmth of the tropics, and in the southern States they will sometimes be reminded of home.



TOWNSVILLE, QLD. On March 12 the Royal couple will fly to Townsville from Brisbane and late that afternoon will leave by sea for Cairns. Out from Cairns they will see the Barrier Reef.

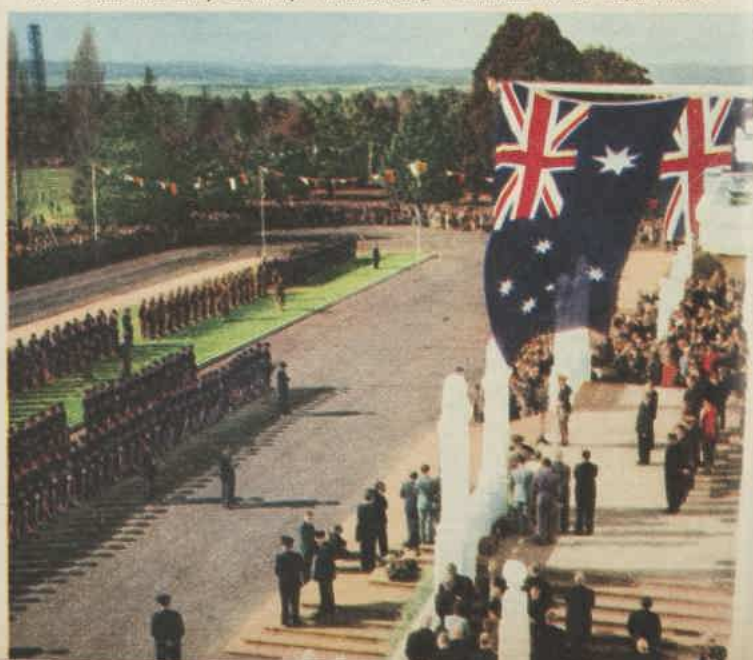


SYDNEY. Water skiers on the Harbor. Water skiers will be seen by the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh when they arrive in T.S.S. Gothic for the official landing in Sydney and the reception at Farm Cove on Wednesday, February 3. The harbor will be alive and noisy with craft "cockadoodling" a welcome to the Royal couple.



SYDNEY. A spectacular display (above) of fireworks on Sydney Harbor will be watched by the Royal couple from Government House on the night of February 3.

CANBERRA. Parliament House (right) at the time of the Coronation celebrations. The Queen's father opened the first Parliament in Canberra on May 9, 1927.

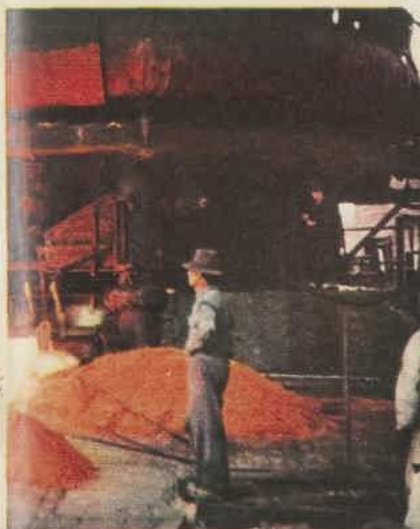




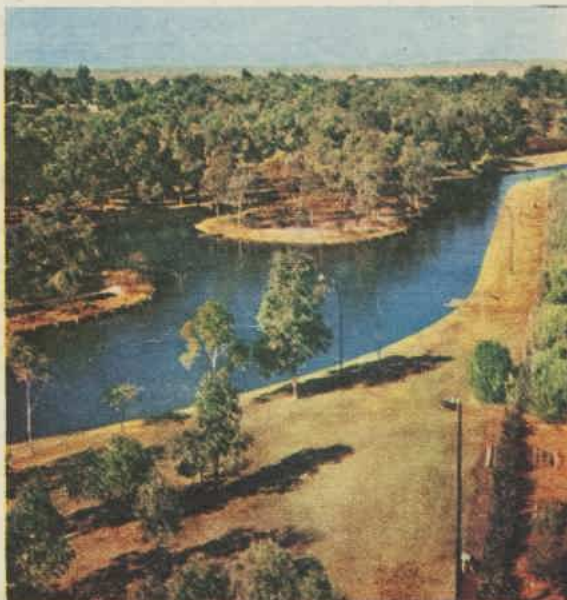
MELBOURNE. Colonnade of the Victorian Houses of Parliament, where the Queen will attend a reception on February 24 and where she will open Parliament on February 25. Later, members and their wives will be presented to Her Majesty in the President's room. The Royal couple will then go to the Melbourne Cricket Ground for an ex-servicemen's assembly.



HOBART. Prince's Pier, where Gothic will anchor on February 20. The Queen has a busy programme in Tasmania, which is the only Australian State where she will stay in a private home. The Royal couple will be the guests of Mrs. R. O'Connor and her son, Roderick, at "Connerville," Cressy.



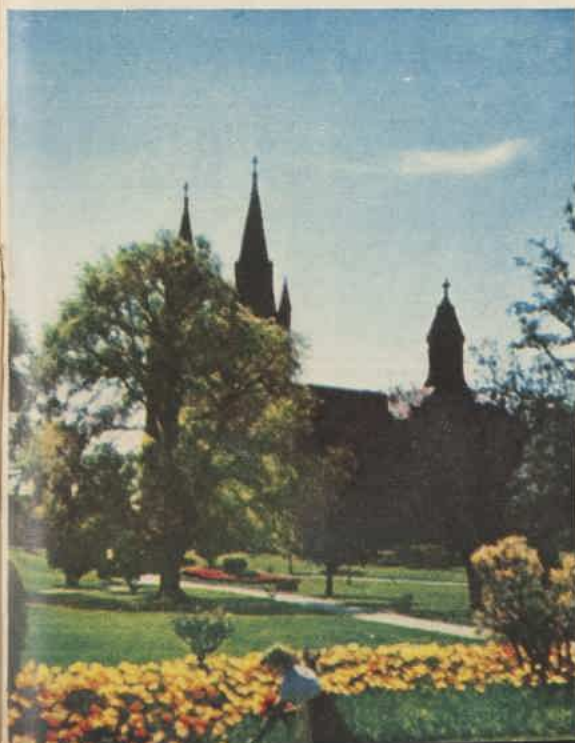
WHYALLA, S.A. (above). Queen Elizabeth and her husband will visit Whyalla, South Australian iron and steel centre, by air on Saturday, March 20, on their way to Adelaide.



BROKEN HILL, N.S.W. Picturesque twin lakes which will be seen from the air by the Queen and the Duke when they arrive at Broken Hill by plane on March 18 for a three-hour visit.



KALGOORLIE, W.A. The swimming-pool which was achieved as a result of the pipeline laid across 375 miles of desert in 1903. Kalgoorlie has planned an enthusiastic welcome for the Queen on Friday, March 26.



ADELAIDE. St. Peter's Cathedral (left), where the Queen and the Duke will attend divine service during their return visit to the city on March 21. They will leave Adelaide for the West on March 26.

ALBANY HARBOR, W.A. The Queen will see the perfect natural harbor at Albany (above) when she motors round the scenic drive on the way back to the airport after a short visit to Albany on March 30.

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DRESS SENSE

THIS fashion flash answers the reader who writes:

"Do you think white cotton lace would be a suitable material to use for a summer ballerina? If so, would you design me a style with a halter neckline? I take a 34in. pattern size."

White cotton lace would be cool and pretty for a summer party frock and, furthermore, is going to be right in fashion for next season. Abroad it has new importance. The design I have chosen for you is illustrated at right. I do hope it is just the type of dress you had in mind. The design requires 5½yds. of lace and 4yd. of 36in. contrasting material. See lines under the picture for further details and how to order.

"WHAT are the newest colors for clothes suitable to wear for a seaside holiday?"

Resort clothes in delicate pastels are showing in the latest 1954 New York resort collections. Blue tones, in every tint from sky to flower shades, palest water-green, and a rose-petal-pink (almost white) are the most featured colors.

"I WOULD like your help about a coat. I want a new one for next winter, but want to have it made as soon as possible. The type I require will be worn travelling from the country to town and back and for not very dressed-up occasions."

For the coming season a large number of sports or travelling coats are in camel-hair. As a rule the silhouette is "loose" and armholes are roomy. Some coats are collarless and others have big important face-framing collars.

"I READ your page with interest each week and now I hope you will assist me with a problem. I am flying to Sydney and then motoring to Adelaide for a two weeks

D.S.71. — Ballerina dress in sizes 32in. to 38in. bust requires 5½yds. 36in. material and 4yd. 36in. contrast. Price, 4/6. Patterns may be obtained from Mrs. Betty Kemp, Dress Sense, Box 4088, G.P.O., Sydney.

visit and am undecided as to the clothes most suitable for my holiday. Perhaps you will be kind enough to offer a few suggestions."

The most appropriate clothes for a travel wardrobe are separates, because of their

● The biggest lace revival since the 'twenties has been launched by top American and French designers.



easy-packing, span-season, and dual-occasion virtues. For instance, what could be more versatile for city wear than a blouse, skirt, and box jacket in three shades of one color? For car or plane travel I advise a sleeveless one-piece made with a skirt wide enough for comfortable "sitting," plus a waist-length matching jacket. A print dress with its own coat can play many roles from lunchtime onwards. For evening, a dress with a mid-calf-length skirt, reasonably simple and pretty, will be the dress you will find the most useful. Be sure to take nylon underwear — it will save you time and money.

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... but its Texture as well as colour needs special care"

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Virginia Roberts
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STILL YOUNG at 50

Don't let "middle age" get you down — that dull, listless feeling that aching back can be due to sluggish kidneys. That's because kidneys are Nature's way of removing harmful acids and wastes from the blood — lary kidneys can cause disturbed nights, swelling, aching joints, headaches, rheumatism, etc. Keep your kidneys "on the job" by taking Doan's Backache Kidney Pills. Doan's should bring you swift relief, as it has to people all over the world. Get Doan's without delay, and feel younger, better, brighter.

HOW TO TREAT PAINFUL HAEMORRHOIDS (PILES)

For fast, blessed relief from sore, fiery, itching Haemorrhoids, get CHINAROID from your chemist. See how fast it usually soothes away pain, soreness, itching, nervousness. See how it cools fiery burning and helps shrink and heal swollen tissues. Wonder-soothing CHINAROID must prove a blessing to you or money back is guaranteed.

Royal portrait offer

To mark the historic visit of Queen Elizabeth II to this country, The Australian Women's Weekly offers its readers a special reprint of the two superb color portraits originally issued as souvenirs of Her Majesty's Coronation.

REPRINTS of these beautiful portraits have been made in response to requests from hundreds of readers who failed to obtain copies during the Coronation season.

One of the pictures, taken by official Court photographer Cecil Beaton, shows the Queen, regal and splendid in her Coronation robes.

The other is of the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh, smiling and waving from the balcony of Buckingham Palace.

Now, only a few months after her Coronation, when the Queen is moving among the peoples of her Dominions, meeting them, getting to know them and their way of life, we feel that our readers will

want to have in their own homes a memento of this most gracious Sovereign.

Readers who wish to obtain copies of these pictures should fill in the coupon on this page and post it to The Australian Women's Weekly, Sydney, together with a postal note for 5/- for each print required; or they may buy them in person by calling at The Australian Women's Weekly office. Interstate readers may obtain their copies from our interstate offices, whose addresses are given on page 2.

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Cuticura SOAP

Solution to last week's crossword.

Continuing Come, My Beloved

from page 5

that Livy had told him. Well, he had to know.

She lifted her eyes from the seam. "What are you going to do about it?"

"What are we going to do about it," he corrected her. Without waiting for her reply, he went on, inconsistently: "I shall buy steamship tickets for the first boat that sails from Bombay. We are all going to America. I shall put Livy in a girl's college."

"Livy isn't really a girl any more," Ruth said. "She's grown a woman, the way they do here, so fast."

"She's a girl in years and in mind," he said. "When she gets to America she will take her place among other girls."

He got up from the bamboo chair where he had flung himself, walked up and down the room and sat down again, waiting for Ruth to agree with him. But she sat silently sewing, as he had seen her do hundreds of times through the years of their marriage.

She found a spiritual calm in sewing, he supposed. A good wife, he knew, and he had learned to love her without ever being in love with her.

Yet what was love? One could not plant a palm tree in the courtyard with another person without in a sense feeling a sort of love, and he and Ruth had done everything together, building the house and rearing the children, teaching and preaching and carrying on the clinic, isolated by what they were, two white people in a world of darkness.

They had believed in the goodness of what they did, they were sure of their faith, and absorbed in their purpose; he did not stop to ask if he loved Ruth as once he had dreamed of loving a woman. All men dream, he told himself, and the reality was best, for reality alone was unselfish in love.

Exhausted often in the parched climate, fatigued often beyond endurance by the desperate demands of the people, he and Ruth clung to each other, and each maintained the other in steadfastness. And this, too, was love, a love which bore visible fruit in hundreds of human lives.

Oh, she could sit silent like this for ever while she sewed!

"Well," he said impatiently, "have you any other plan?"

"No," she said slowly. "I don't know that I have. It's just that I hate to leave Vhai. I guess you're right, Ted. We had better take her away from India."

"Will you tell her, or shall I?"

"You had better do it," she said, and did not lift her head.

So he told Livy the next evening, his heart soft and hard together. He sat on the verandah in the twilight, watching her toss a ball with Sara, the only one of his children who was still a child.

Sara was like his great-grandfather, a fiery, bone-thin child who passionately loved her elder sister. He kept his eyes on Livy, graceful in her soft rose-pink sari, moving here and there with gliding steps to catch the rag ball Sara threw wilfully here and there.

"Livy!" he called through the dusk.

"Coming," she replied. She seemed in good mood, her soft oval face was cheerful, and she came at once. India was her climate; the heat did not depress her; she looked fresh and cool, though the night was humid.

"Sit down, daughter," he said.

She sank on the bamboo couch near him, and Sara, deserted, cried in a high childish voice that wound itself into the singing rhythm of Indian speech, "It will soon be dark, come and play, Livy."

"This is for you, too," the father said.

She came and squeezed herself between them.

"What have I done?" she demanded.

"Nothing," the father said. "It is I who have done something," Livy said smoothly. "It is I who have been naughty and now Father is going to punish me."

"Livy is not naughty," Sara insisted. "Never is she naughty."

"Sometimes I am," Livy said. Her dark eyes hardened and glowed, and she turned them sideways upon her father, but he refused the challenge.

"It can scarcely be called a punishment to go to America, and that is what we shall do. I have written for the tickets and the gateman has posted the letter already. Perhaps we must go even in a very few days."

Sara clung to Livy's waist and tightened her arms. To go to America was at once a dream and a dread. She had asked hundreds of questions about America, and sometimes she lay awake in the night to think about that beautiful and even imaginary place.

But now that her father said so coolly, "I have written for the tickets," Vhai was immediately too dear to leave, even though in America snakes did not crawl in the garden nor scorpions hide in the shoes at night.

"Isn't that good news, Sara?"

her father asked.

"Perhaps the children there won't like me," Sara said.

"It is not good news, Father," Livy said. Entire awareness was implicit in her voice and her furious dark eyes were fixed upon his face.

"It isn't good news, Father," Sara echoed, clinging to Livy's waist. "If Livy doesn't think so, I don't think so."

"Nevertheless, we are going," the father said, "and we shall stay for a year, except Livy, who will stay four whole years, because she is going to college. She will go to college and learn to be an American girl, and grow into an American woman. And maybe she will marry an American man and stay in America."

"Oh, no, no," Sara cried, "for then how can she live with us in Vhai?"

"Perhaps then she will not want to live in Vhai," the father said. "America is a wonderful country, there are wide roads and cars and great trains, even aeroplanes flying everywhere. Livy will have pretty clothes, and she will learn to sing and play the piano, and in the summer she may go to England and to France."

"Let me get up, please, Sara," Livy said. She tugged at the arms about her waist.

Ted did not stop her or ask her where she was going. He had dealt the blow, and he must let her take it as she could.

"Come and sit on my lap, Sara," he said, ignoring Livy. "I will tell you more about America."

The little girl loosened her clutch upon her sister's waist, and, diverted by the invitation, she went to her father.

In the darkness, lit only by the glow falling through the open doors and windows as servants went about lighting the lamps in the house, he told her about America, the endless mountains and the long rivers, the great cities, and the house where her grandfather lived, and before that her great-grandfather, whom she had never seen, who was now dead.

"America is your country, you know," he told her. "India is not your real country, and Vhai is not your own place, not really, you know."

"I didn't know," Sara said in wonder, "I always thought it was."

He fell silent when she said this, smitten like Peter of old by conviction of betrayal at night, while his heart reproached him, and he heard the wailing music of Vhai

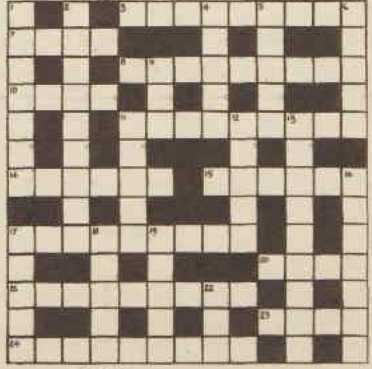
To page 43

THIS WEEK'S CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- Deserendant from (9)
- Take off (4)
- Both, the young and the old were soft at the end (8)
- Stagger in dance (4)
- In Bombay, these ladies must be white (3, 8)
- With oil and tea the bukkie went bad (6)
- Greedy earth for a schoolboy (6)
- He remains a dealer in drugs even in his bath (2, 6)
- Eye wash? (4)
- Brawling woman has a word with a Turkish commander, on the Northern Territory (8)
- They rank higher than kings at some tables (4)
- Don't try to hang up your important Christmas food on this tendon (8)

Solution will be published next week.



DOWN

- Skull in clothing apparently made after the first Christmas (7)
- Bid to a conservative the collection of money during divine service (9)
- Consumed in a steamer, it satisfies (5)
- Find a cattle station in an irregular abode (4)
- Microbes in first principles (5)
- As a rule you don't get eggs like this with your bacon (3)
- Germinate barley with a British island (5)
- Play or player (6)
- Lend no ice; it could lead to nothness (9)
- Copier in the French dozen dozen (7)
- Once it's a language twice it's gibberish (5)
- Its capital is Vathy (5)
- Beer which shows its age (5)
- Unmarried sister whichever way you look on her (11)

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THE AUSTRALIAN WOMEN'S WEEKLY - January 27, 1954

Continuing . . . Come, My Beloved

winding up from the streets now hidden by darkness.

Meanwhile Livi was walking with swift and reckless steps, heedless of the snakes and the night insects, the folds of her sari gathered in her hand and over her head the scarf which hid her bent profile.

At this hour Jatin would be in his room next to the clinic, the little lean-to which her father had built for him when he came to be the resident doctor for the Vhai Hospital. She had never been in his rooms except the day they were finished, before he moved in, when with her parents they had inspected the place for his coming.

There were four rooms, enough for his family when he married, for, of course, he would marry, her father said, and four rooms would be spacious here in Vhai. And four rooms would be spacious for her, too, she could have made a home there with Jatin, she had dreamed of it, she had even talked of it, though he would never listen.

"It will never happen—never can it be so," Jatin had said again and again.

"Jatin, you are always discouraged," she had cried. "You must be bold, you must insist! If I want something very much I always insist."

To this Jatin had replied only with dark, sad looks. His eyes, tragic in their shape and color, large and liquid, the lashes long and thick, carried in their shadows the memory of unknown sorrows, a deep racial grief which he had inherited and now possessed as his own nature.

He was always sure that the worst would happen, he would not lift a hand against fate, for he could not believe in happiness, and he accepted disappointment before it fell.

Oh, tonight, she told herself, he must be made to understand, tonight he must be made to see clearly that a man seizes his own, he holds it fast, and she was his.

Her feet scarcely touched the grass as she ran, winged with fear as well as love, fear of death and fear of life. What if a snake bit her, and what if Jatin did not have the courage?

He loved her, that she knew, for he was deep-hearted and passionate, yet even love might not make him strong enough. He gave up too easily, small wishes and great longings alike he surrendered quickly if he were opposed. Tonight she would insist, yes, she was the one to insist.

She ran up the three steps of the small verandah outside the four rooms. The light burned within, the mellow light of his oil lamp, and she knocked at the open door.

He sat in his study and she could not see him, but the light fell in a bar upon the floor of the little entrance hall. He heard the knock and came out at once, barefoot, wearing a sleeveless singlet and dhoti, expecting no one at this hour, unless a call from the hospital.

"Livi," he cried softly in a voice of horror. "Why are you here?"

"Let me in, Jatin," she said. The screen door was hooked and she shook it slightly.

He unhooked it and she slipped inside.

"I must put out the light," he whispered. His face was anxious. "They will see you—perhaps someone has already seen you."

"For that I don't care," she said in her natural voice. "Don't whisper, Jatin—what does it matter who knows, now that my parents know?"

Yet he was uneasy and he stood, hesitating.

"Very well, then," she said. "We will just sit here in the hall in the shadow. I will not

from page 41

stay, Jatin, since you are so afraid. But I had to tell you. Father has sent for steamship tickets. We are going to America, and he will not allow me to come back. A year, Jatin—they will stay a year, but I must stay four! And how could I come back to Vhai if he will not let me? So you must demand me in marriage, Jatin—or we must be married secretly if they will not let us marry openly."

"How is it possible for us to be married secretly?" he asked, his voice agitated by his distress. "We would have to go to the American Consulate in Poona, and there your father and grandfather are well known. The Consul would tell them before he gave us the permission. There is no way. We must give each other up."

She bit her lips and turned away her face.

"I knew you would say that. I knew you would not have the

Smoking and lung cancer

THE consumption of tobacco by women smokers in Britain has increased nearly tenfold in the last quarter-century—from 2.5 per cent. of all tobacco sold in the country 25 years ago to 22 per cent. today. In the same period England's lung cancer death rate—for both sexes—rose from 20 per million people to 278 per million.

These facts are of interest to women smokers in view of recent widely publicised medical opinions, backed by impressive figures, that there is a connection between smoking and the alarming rise in the incidence of lung cancer.

A.M., the popular weekly magazine, has a thought-provoking article on this subject in its January 26 issue.

courage. I don't know why I love you."

"Nor I," he said humbly.

In misery they sat side by side on a stiff little rattan settle, the bar of light falling like a curtain between them and the open door. They faced the door, and he stared into the shadowy night, piercing the darkness to search for hidden figures, for cave-droppers and prowlers. Nothing was hidden in Vhai, nothing was secret. Of course, the people knew, but never before had she come to his rooms.

Yet his easily roused blood quickened and grew warm. She was sitting close to him, her slender thigh pressed against his leg, bare under the cotton dhoti. She was silent, a graceful, drooping shape beside him, and he reached for her hand and took it between his and stroked it gently in long, soft movements, palm against his palm, his fingers stroking between hers.

She drooped towards him, and he put his arm about her waist. Love could be denied, yes, but sometimes it was uncontrollable. Here in the night, with everything forbidden them, love itself was uncontrollable. Nobody had seen her come and none need see her go. The night was growing late. He could put out the light and the house would be dark.

No servant slept in the house, and if a message came from the hospital, he would have to go to the door, but there was

also the back door, the one that led from his bathing-room, where the gardener carried the water in and out, and she could slip away from there. The gods of Vhai would protect her from serpents and insects, and she could flee across the lawn again.

He rose and hooked the door and then he went into the other room and put out the lamp, and in the darkness he came back to her and sat down again. Stroking her hands, he stroked up her arms and about her neck, down her cheeks and into her little ears. She gave a great sigh.

"What now?" he whispered, "what now, Livi?"

She trembled, she put her arms about his neck and leaned her head upon his shoulder, and did not speak a word. He took her silence for reply, and he lifted her in his strong dark arms and carried her into the house.

Once he halted at the threshold of his sleeping-room. She was murmuring against his breast. "What do you say, Livi?"

"I said I want it to happen—whatever will happen, I want it."

"But we must keep it secret."

"I want it!" This once, he was thinking, he was promising himself, only the once, and it was not likely that anyone need know. And then, of course, they must part.

He had known it from the first, he had never had any hope, none at all. But hopeless love was the worst, the most terrible, the most enduring, and this would be the end.

Yet whose fault but hers that it was not the end? For it was she who went silent-footed through the darkness again and yet again, the mischievous gods protecting her bare feet from serpents and noxious creatures, and there was no end to their love.

She was frightened at her own wickedness, but she did not cease it. Here was she, the child of Christian parents, she who knew the Commandments and knew, too, the meaning of goodness and purity and righteousness, those great swelling words which shone like suns above her head and in whose light she had supposed she walked, and yet she came and went by night like any magdalen.

Night after night she went to Jatin, and now he, too, lost his fear in desperation. Let the villagers whisper and cross their eyes and pretend not to see. His love grew monstrous, possessing him like a disease, inflamed by the certainty that any day would decide the hour that Livi must leave him for ever. He did not doubt the end, but he seized each day as it came, and waited for each night.

Eleven days and eleven nights thus passed and her father did not suspect, for had he imagined what happened in the night when she slept behind his mosquito net, could it be imagined that he would not speak? He would snatch Livi away and take her at least as far as Poona, and that would be the end, too.

And Jatin did not know how Livi behaved during the day, how quiet she was, how obedient, how sweet-voiced and yielding to her father's least wish, and how candidly her gaze met her mother's doubting eyes.

She played with Sara, she mended and sewed and helped her mother pack the trunks for the journey, she served her father's guests with little cakes, with slices of lemon, and with sweetmeats, and the guests,

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People who live in glass houses



need

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Pasly Hordern's

Here are six lovely ensembles chosen for a Royal garden party in Australia during the visit of the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh.



● Pink uncrushable, heavy silk tulle is Dior's choice for the one-piece frock and matching toque above. The bodice and skirt fold out from the fitted princess waistline into a flower-like silhouette.



● Gala, cool, and romantic is Dior's white lace frock (left). The model has a matching lace parasol and a closely fitting feather toque. Youthful ensemble by the same designer (above) is made in white organza. The coat is lined with blue and spattered with bunches of appliqued blue flowers matched to the tiny flower toque.



Paris Notes

● Pale lilac paper shantung is Nina Ricci's choice for the finely pleated frock (left), worn with a matching coat. The enormous pale lilac hat is layered with curled feathers.



● Rose-pink mousseline bodice-top and long matching gloves give character to Fath's slim-line frock (right). The hat is made in layers of matching organza.

● Superbly feminine frock (left) in shades of honey-beige mousseline designed by Gres. Yellow embroideries trim the simple bodice-top and form two panels in the skirt. The long gloves are matched in color to a wide-brimmed hat.



Dorothea Johnston

E-R

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1. LEFT. STARS Julie (Esther Williams) and Hank (John Bromfield), left, arrange trip to New York with manager Ray (Van Johnson.)

2. ABOVE. NIGHT-CLUB singer Barry (Tony Martin) falls for Julie, who thinks Ray's interest in her is aroused when he breaks up party.

Easy to love

★ Esther Williams has three admirers in Metro's new musical, "Easy to Love." They are Van Johnson, singer Tony Martin, and John Bromfield. Filmed in technicolor against picturesque backgrounds of Florida's Cypress Gardens, the film features Esther in four lavish water ballets and a sequence which takes place on water-skis.

Tony Martin sings several numbers, and John Bromfield joins in swimming scenes.

Van Johnson plays a go-getting manager.



3. ANGRY Julie threatens to accept Broadway offer to end Ray's exploitation of her. But he talks her into returning home on pretext that he has something to tell her.

4. HAPPILY Julie confides to her roommate that Ray will propose, but he dodges issue.



5. EVENING OUT with Barry, who arrives from New York unexpectedly, brings proposal from him. Julie is flattered, but, still thinking of Ray, she does not give him definite answer. Meanwhile Ray finds he loves Julie.



6. BEDRAGGLED Julie tells Nancy (Edna Skinner) that romance with Ray is out. During boat ride he proposes, but they argue and she swims home.



7. ABOVE. HANK is enraged at Julie's romance with Barry, and creates big scene at the flat.



8. RIGHT. ACCIDENT to Julie makes Hank and Barry fight. When it's over, Julie is missing with Ray.

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CITY FILM GUIDE

Films reviewed

CAPITOL.—★ "Christmas Eve," drama, starring George Raft, Randolph Scott, Joan Blondell. Plus ★ "Caged Fury," circus mystery, starring Richard Denning, Sheila Ryan. (Both re-releases.)

CENTURY.—★ "The Moon Is Blue," comedy, starring William Holden, Maggie McNamara, David Niven. Plus featurettes.

EMBASSY.—★ "The Beggar's Opera," technicolor musical adventure, starring Sir Laurence Olivier, Stanley Holloway, Dorothy Tutin, Daphne Anderson. Plus featurettes.

ESQUIRE.—★ "Inferno," technicolor thriller, starring Robert Ryan, Rhonda Fleming, William Lundigan. Plus ★ "Mantrap," British thriller, starring Paul Henreid.

LIBERTY.—★ "Kiss Me, Kate," 3-D technicolor musical comedy, starring Howard Keel, Kathryn Grayson. Plus featurettes.

LYCEUM.—★ "Walking My Baby Back Home," technicolor musical comedy, starring Donald O'Connor, Janet Leigh. Plus ★ "Son of Ali Baba," technicolor fantasy, starring Tony Curtis.

LYRIC.—★ "The Story of Three Loves," technicolor drama, starring Kirk Douglas, Pier Angeli, Leslie Caron, James Mason. Plus ★ "Go West," comedy, starring the Marx Brothers. (Both re-releases.)

MAYFAIR AND PARK.—★ "Peter Pan," Walt Disney's full-length technicolor cartoon. Plus ★★ "Water Birds," technicolor feature.

PALACE.—★ "Beast from 20,000 Fathoms," pseudo-scientific thriller, starring Paul Christian, Paula Raymond, Cecil Kellaway. (See review this page.) Plus "Wild Stallion," Cinecolor Western, starring Ben Johnson, Edgar Buchanan, Martha Meyer.

PRINCE EDWARD.—★ "Road to Bali," technicolor comedy, starring Bing Crosby, Bob Hope, Dorothy Lamour. Plus featurettes.

REGENT.—★ "The Robe," technicolor Biblical drama in CinemaScope, starring Richard Burton, Jean Simmons, Victor Mature. Plus featurettes.

SAVOY.—★ "Our Summer of Happiness," Swedish-language drama, starring Ulla Jacobsson, Folke Sundquist. Plus ★★ "Ukrainian Concert Hall," color music feature.

STATE.—★ "The Cruel Sea," British wartime drama, starring Jack Hawkins, Denholm Elliott, Donald Sinden. Plus "South Pacific Playground," color feature.

VARIETY.—★ "Rigoletto," screen version of the Verdi opera, with Tito Gobbi, Lina Pagliughi. Plus featurettes.

Films not reviewed

PLAZA.—★ "How to Marry a Millionaire," technicolor CinemaScope comedy, starring Marilyn Monroe, Lauren Bacall, Betty Grable, David Wayne, Cameron Mitchell, William Powell. Plus "Coronation Parade," technicolor CinemaScope feature.

ST. JAMES.—★ "Take the High Ground," wartime drama in color, starring Richard Widmark, Elaine Stewart. Plus featurettes.

VICTORY.—★ "Hangman's Knot," Western, starring Randolph Scott, Donna Reed. Plus "Valley of the Head Hunters," jungle adventure, starring Johnny Weissmuller.

Talking of Films

By M. J. McMAHON

★ The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms

IN Warners' new thriller a top writer and special effects craftsmen exploit the book of science-fiction tricks and add a few new ones for good measure.

In spite of this, "The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms" is a near-miss in spine-chilling entertainment.

The beast is a prehistoric monster which is revived by an atom explosion after umpteen million years of repose in the Arctic deep freeze.

Made hostile by this treatment, the beast, which is twice as large as any previously recorded by experts of the Museum of Natural History, heads down the coast towards New York.

En route it crushes fishing boats, topples a lighthouse, and smashes seaside cottages, and manages to scare the day-lights out of a couple of people who happen to glimpse it.

Scientists Paul Christian, Cecil Kellaway, and Paula Raymond alert the U.S. Army and Navy, and a state of emergency exists when the beast heaves out of the water on to a New York wharf.

Pandemonium breaks loose

as it lumbers through city highways, and it soon becomes clear to the audience that the big fellow will take a lot of despatching.

Machine-gun bullets simply bounce off its hide. A bazooka shell penetrates it, and by shooting a radioactive isotope into the wound from the top of a roller-coaster at Coney Island a marksman succeeds in downing the poor creature. In Sydney.—Palace.

RICHARD GREENE and Patricia Medina, though divorced, are sticking to their announcement that they are still friends—a glib utterance of many parting couples that often raises a wry eyebrow. Richard has been escorting Pat to a series of London film premieres. They really are still good friends.

MARGARET LOCKWOOD is not only making a comeback in films, but is also making new conquests on stage and television. Agatha Christie has just written and tailored a play for her called "The Spider's Web." And T.V. is starring her as the first woman hostess of its top quiz panel show, "What's My Line?"



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THE ANTISEPTIC DOCTORS USE

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looking at her, kept their peace.

Some knew and some did not, but soon all would know, and Livi felt their knowing, she saw it in their dark, speaking eyes, she heard it in their words, for they greeted her, intimately, as one of them, or they greeted her with hostility, but now not only as the daughter of her father.

She bore their greetings, however they came, for she could not have drawn herself out of the net into which she had thrown herself, and she knew as well as Jatin did that there was no hope. There was no hope in him, she knew that now, and so she must accept him as he was and snatch what she could in the shortening hours.

At night she went early to her room, the little room at the end of the house, and she let the ayah wait upon her and see her undressed and bathed and upon her bed.

Sometimes she was sure the ayah knew the pretence, but she did not prove it. Unspoken, the ayah was not responsible, but were the words spoken she would be compelled to tell Livi's parents, and so she would not know. So far the secret was clear between them, and neither wanted it more clear.

Sometimes actually she went to sleep, and once or twice she slept through until dawn and then it was too late.

But seven out of the eleven nights she woke, or she did not sleep, and then she slipped across the grassy paths, feeling beneath her feet the dreadful chance of the night-roaming cobra, but none came near, and then she tapped softly at the door, the back door of Jatin's house, and instantly he let her in, knowing desperately that he destroyed himself by what he did.

Meanwhile Ted strove to put his domain in order so that when he returned to Vhai there might be no loss. He was grateful for the task which kept him busy day and night, so that he need not face himself in the mirror of his own soul. He could not now decide right from

wrong. He must have time to consider, to ponder and to meditate.

More here was concerned than that Livi had fallen in love with the nearest young man, who happened to be Jatin. This fact, an experience common, he supposed, to every father, had strange deep roots inside himself. Why did his flesh and his mind rise up against the knowledge that Livi wanted to marry Jatin?

He could not answer his own question but he was so disturbed by it that he found himself repelled by the very sight of Livi moving about the house in graceful silence, even while his heart yearned over her.

When he had time, on the ship and in America, he would look into the hidden mirror and face himself. Not now, however, not on this soil could it be done. He had to get away, but first he must get Livi away so that he could be free from the nagging necessity to know where she was every moment of the day.

Only when the ayah came out of her room at night, and he knew her safely in bed, could he rest, and even then it was no rest, for there was Ruth, his wife, watching him thoughtfully, and asking no questions. Oh, she had them, he knew, but she would not ask them now, and he could not risk them. They were pent up in her and he dared not release them. Nor did he wish to know what she thought, if she

Continuing Come, My Beloved

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were thinking, as perhaps she was not, for she had an Indian trick of simply allowing a matter to rest inside her until in silent growth it took on shape of its own, and then she was voluble and persistent.

Let that come on the ship, or in America, when he had Livi safely away.

And he did not know, how could he, that every Indian in the compound watched over Livi, and that they shielded her from him by complete silence.

PRESENTLY,

when the family had gone to America, the villagers would talk endlessly, but now it was the child they protected, the little Livi who had grown up among them, and who was part of them while he was not, and never could be. He belonged to the white men, but she had come, a solitary little figure, towards them.

Whenever she came to Jatin she came to them. They longed to stretch out their arms and draw her into themselves, but they waited in silence, to see whether he would take her away. Not a hint did they give of the secret, and part of the shield and the covering was their obedience to Ted, their quick willingness to help him prepare everything for the departure.

Nevertheless Jehar, the Christian sadhu, walking south-

ward, was met by rumour, a seemingly unspoken communication which spread from mouth to ear, village to village, until it was brought to his ears. He heard and hastened to Vhai, knowing what was being going on in the earth-walled house.

He arrived there one evening when the sun was setting over green fields. The moon-rooms were ended, the fields had not yet dried to dust, and the sun fell behind the horizon in clear color as he stood before the gate door of the house.

Ted looked through the open window of his study, aware that someone had passed, and seeing the familiar and well-loved figure he rose and went to the door himself.

"Jehar!" Ted exclaimed. "There is no one whom I had rather see at this moment."

He put out his hand and clasped Jehar's large smooth hand, and drew him into the house and thence into the study. There he closed the door, and the two stood gazing at each other. Jehar was taller, a mighty figure, his height emphasised by the small, closely wound turban on his head, and by the sweeping folds of his saffron robe.

"Sit down," Ted said. "Are you hungry or thirsty?"

"Neither," Jehar replied. His voice was deep and peaceful, his great eyes, intensely dark, were mild and affectionate, and his black beard and brows made

his olive skin pale but not colorless. His feet were bare.

Barefoot he had walked over much of the world, even in the snows of Tibet. He had been to Europe and to England, and at last to America, but everywhere he was the same.

Ted sat down near him, and, putting his hands on his knees, he continued to look at his old friend.

"I had no idea that you were near Vhai."

"I was not," Jehar replied. "I have been preaching among the Sikhs. While I was there, word came to me that you were planning to return soon to your own country, and so I came to inquire if it is true, and if it is, when you will come back to us."

"It is true," Ted said. He hesitated, and then suddenly the need to confide his trouble overcame him.

There was no one to whom he could speak so freely as he could to Jehar, no one who would understand so well why he felt that Livi must not marry Jatin, even though Jatin was good. So he told Jehar exactly what had happened, and why he was taking Livi away quickly.

Jehar listened, nodding his head now and again.

"I can see," he said. "I understand. I could not have understood, perhaps, had I not seen your home. Ted, my brother, I have never told you that I saw your father in New York."

"My father told me," Ted replied with some diffidence. His father had written him almost angrily that Jehar had behaved in New York exactly as though he were in India, and while he had made an impression it was not as a Christian, but as a swami, a fakir, someone strange, and even false.

"He has not been asked to speak in any of the important pulpits," his father wrote. "There is something distasteful to the true Christian in this parading of Indian robes, bare feet, and so on. It was distressing to us all."

"Perhaps he did not tell you

To page 51

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IN AND OUT OF SOCIETY

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By RUD



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that he felt it his duty to rebuke me," Jehar said with a smile. "I accepted his rebuke for I knew that he must make it, but I went on as I was. I was not a swami, I told him, for that name means 'Lord,' and I am no lord. I am only a sadhu, that is, a religious man, and being an Indian I may use that name, even though I see God through Jesus Christ."

"Did my father understand?" Ted asked.

"I do not know how nearly his heart and mind are one," Jehar replied. He sat thoughtfully for a little while, and Ted, accustomed to such silences, waited.

When Jehar spoke, it was not to mention Livy's name.

"You will remember," he said, "that verse from the Mahabharata which Gandhiji likes so well to quote—"

He paused, drew his breath, closed his eyes and then began to chant with a deep pulsing rhythm.

"The individual may be sacrificed for the family.

The family may be sacrificed for the sake of the village.

The village may be sacrificed for the sake of the province.

The province may be sacrificed for the sake of the country.

For the sake of conscience, however, sacrifice all."

Continuing . . .

Come, My Beloved

from page 49

He opened his eyes and looked earnestly at Ted, his dark and penetrating gaze seeming to cast an actual physical warmth upon Ted's flesh, or so Ted imagined.

"What does your conscience say?" Jehar inquired.

"I do not know," Ted replied. "I have only acted as I felt I must."

Jehar listened to this, his gaze still affectionately upon his friend.

"You have been busy, but when all is done, then you will have time to listen. Each conscience is different from every other, and mine must not speak for yours. What is the conscience?"

It is the most highly developed part of the human being, the core of the spirit, the most sensitive, the most tender. It is shaped by the mores of a given society, it is developed towards wisdom by individual experience, it is maintained by the strength of the will. Your conscience is different from mine—as mine is different from every other. For me it has been right to live the life of a sadhu in the old Hindu sense, while preaching only Christ. As I told your father, love and home and wealth are wrong for me, while

right for others, and I have my rewards."

He continued slowly: "Here in Vhai you have done a great thing, and you have made a renunciation far beyond that of most men of your kind, and you have your rewards as I have mine. Your father cannot understand this, any more than he can understand me. No matter—you have your reward, as I have mine. But now—"

He shook his head, and Ted recognised the old light of ecstasy in the fathomless Indian eyes.

"But now," Jehar went on, "a new opportunity has come to you. It is not for me to counsel you. The opportunity comes to you from God as all things come to us from God. What does it mean? You may ask yourself, is what you have done not enough? If you feel it is enough, if your conscience says it is enough, then it is enough, and you will have your reward. But, if in the quiet of the ship upon the sea, your conscience tells you that what you have done is not enough, that God offers to you the opportunity for more, then listen to your conscience. The ladder to Heaven is made of steps. With each step we think we have reached the goal. But there is another step, and the final one before the gates of God is the one when all of self is given."

Ted fought the old magic of the dark eyes and the powerful gentle voice. He tried to laugh.

"Jehar, you will never make an Indian of me! I am hopelessly American, though I trust I am as good a Christian as you are."

Jehar smiled.

"Why should I wish to make you what you are not born? It is because you are an American that I delight to call you my brother, and I have seen for myself how much you have renounced in order to be a Christian in India. What I had given up is nothing in comparison to the riches, the pleasures, the honors you might have had in your own country. But you have chosen to live your life here in an Indian village, in an earth-walled house covered with thatch. I am humble before you. You have even brought up your children here, and I have had no children. I do not know what it is to have a child demanded in sacrifice."

He went on, speaking very forcibly. "But what I see, in my humility, is that you have lived so fully the life of a Christian in my country that you are now given the final invitation to accept an Indian for your own son, and his children as your grandchildren. It is possible now for you to take the step of complete brotherhood,

in flesh as in the spirit. God has made this possible for you that your life may complete the whole meaning of Christ."

The very air was trembling with intensity. Jehar's grave voice quivered, he lifted his magnificent head, he closed his eyes, and went into silent prayer.

And Ted, too, was compelled to silence. He could not pray, but he sat immobile, not thinking, not feeling. With his whole will he resisted the magnetism of Jehar. He refused to be compelled.

It was over in a moment. Jehar opened his eyes and gave his natural vivid smile. He rose.

"I am glad that you told me yourself. Others will tell me, and I shall tell them that I know all, and that whatever you do is according to your conscience. And now, Ted, dear brother, I shall go on my way."

"Stay with us tonight, Jehar."

He made the invitation, but he did not urge it. He felt suddenly very weary and for some reason depressed. Usually Jehar lifted up his spirit, but tonight Jehar could not reach his heart.

"I cannot, Ted," Jehar replied. "I am expected tomorrow morning some thirty miles south of Vhai, and I shall walk through the night."

They clasped hands again and Jehar put his left hand over their clasped hands.

"Come back," he said. "At least come back to India."

"Of course," Ted said.

Jehar said no more. He stepped back, and looking into Ted's eyes, held his upraised hands together, palm to palm, in the old Indian greeting and farewell. "I am God in you," the gesture said.

Ted bowed his head and stood watching half-wistfully the tall figure walking barefoot towards the south.

And after Jehar had gone, he remembered. Why had Jehar said India and not Vhai?

On the last day, Ted called Jatin to him.

"Jatin," he said. "I leave you in charge of the compound. You will keep the medical work going, and I have sent for a young man from Poona for the schools. Jehar will pass by now and again and hold the church together. You will not miss me too much."

"We shall miss you," Jatin said.

He stood before Ted wearing his hospital gown, tall and steadfast, his arms folded.

"Sit down," Ted said.

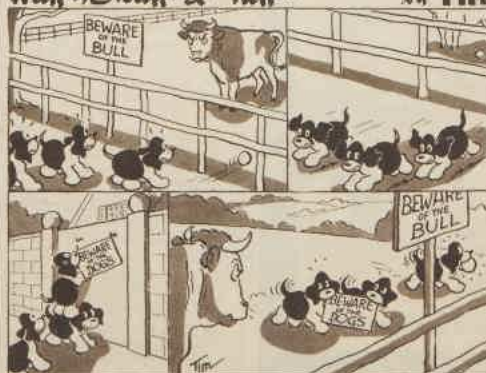
Jatin sat down. Whatever his duty was he would not tell of the seven nights. They would be hidden in his memory, deep as jewels in a cave beneath the sea. Life would flow over them, but no one would know.

"I wish to thank you," Ted

To page 54

FOR THE CHILDREN

Wuff, Snuff & Tuff



by TIM

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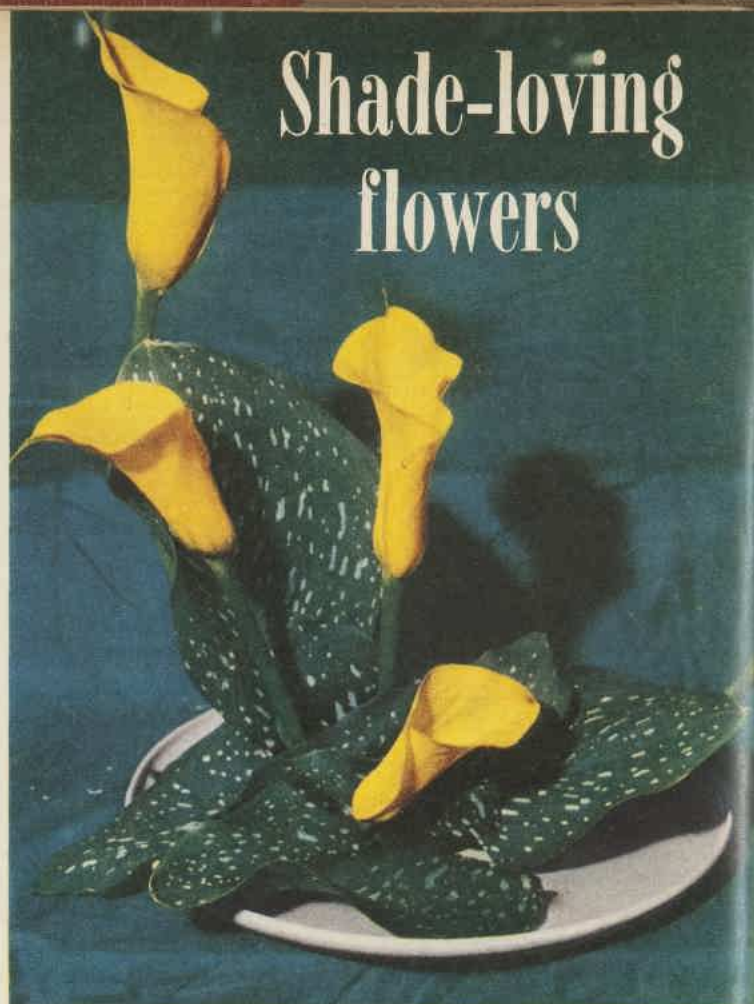
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Shade-loving flowers



YELLOW CALLA LILIES and their decorative spotted leaves attractively arranged in a shallow bowl make a fine display. Calla lilies are now in season and may be seen growing under trees in parks and gardens.

In Australia, where the sun shines for the greater part of the year, gardeners have largely failed to realise the value of shade, and the study of shade-loving plants is still in its infancy.

THIS side of gardening has been too long neglected in a country where gardens could gain character and charm from flowers growing in cool, shady spots.

Nature has produced thousands of plants which grow or flower profusely when given the protection and coolness of a shady nook.

These vary from tiny moss-like plants to great ferns and beautiful climbers. They could be used to fill a bush-house or indoor garden, side by side with the many plants which the gardener knows from experience will grow well when given partial or deep shade.

You have only to look at the deep gullies in the bush to see how lavish nature is with ferns, mosses, and small climbing plants, which find sanctuary where the moisture is plentiful and the soil mostly acid.

In such places the ground is carpeted with greenery, and, in season, often with color.

When you are planning a shady garden, you should become familiar with the variations of shade, for in mid-summer the sun is right overhead for some months, and complete shade is often difficult to obtain.

To give a complete list of plants requiring full shade, half shade and light shade — the three main divisions — would require many pages. It is possible to select only those known to be obtainable here, and to name the most popular and hardy species and varieties that do well in our climatic conditions.

During the next month or six weeks, you can sow seeds of English primroses, primulas, cowslips, oxlips, polyanthus, and the even more beautiful Chinese and Japanese primu-

las, which rightly should be grown in pots under glass.

Most of the primrose family do quite well out of doors provided they are given morning sun and shade during the heat of the afternoon. The primulas, such as the malacoides group, flower well in full sunlight, but as the colors fade they are best planted in a semi-shady spot.

Foxgloves come from the hedgerows of old England, and need a semi-shady spot where their tender spikes of hanging bells can show their color in the mild morning sun, but are shaded during the heat of the day. You can sow seed

now, but they take two years to flower.

For the shady bed at the back or side of the house, low growers are suitable; Iris verna or cristata, shortia, Solomon's seal, trilliums, geranium Robertianum, columbines, hepatica, Japanese anemones, phlox divaricata (blue), sedum ternatum, sedum nevii, erythronium, many of the lilliums such as L. canadense, November lilies, tiger lilies, regale, and auratum. All of these do well in semi-shade.

Thalictrum like semi-shade, and so do lobelia cardinalis, achillea roseum, snowflakes, forget-me-nots, many of the begonias, particularly fibrous-rooted types and rex (leafy types).

Clethra arborea is a shade-lover of great beauty, and most of the astilbes do best when half-shaded. Trollius (globe flower), rudbeckia, polygala, some of the cornus family, Chinese witch hazel, aralias, ardisias, fuchsias, many of the berberis family, hollies, daphne genkwa, euonymus, mahonias, and aronias are also shade-tolerant and very beautiful.

Bulbous flowers such as English, Spanish, and Siberian bluebells do well when given some shade, and flower profusely if the soil is right. Snowdrops, snowflakes, daffodils, callas, arum lilies, most anemones, hyacinths, and jonquils all brighten up the garden if given morning sunlight only in semi-shaded beds.

— R. G. Edwards.

GARDENING

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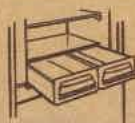
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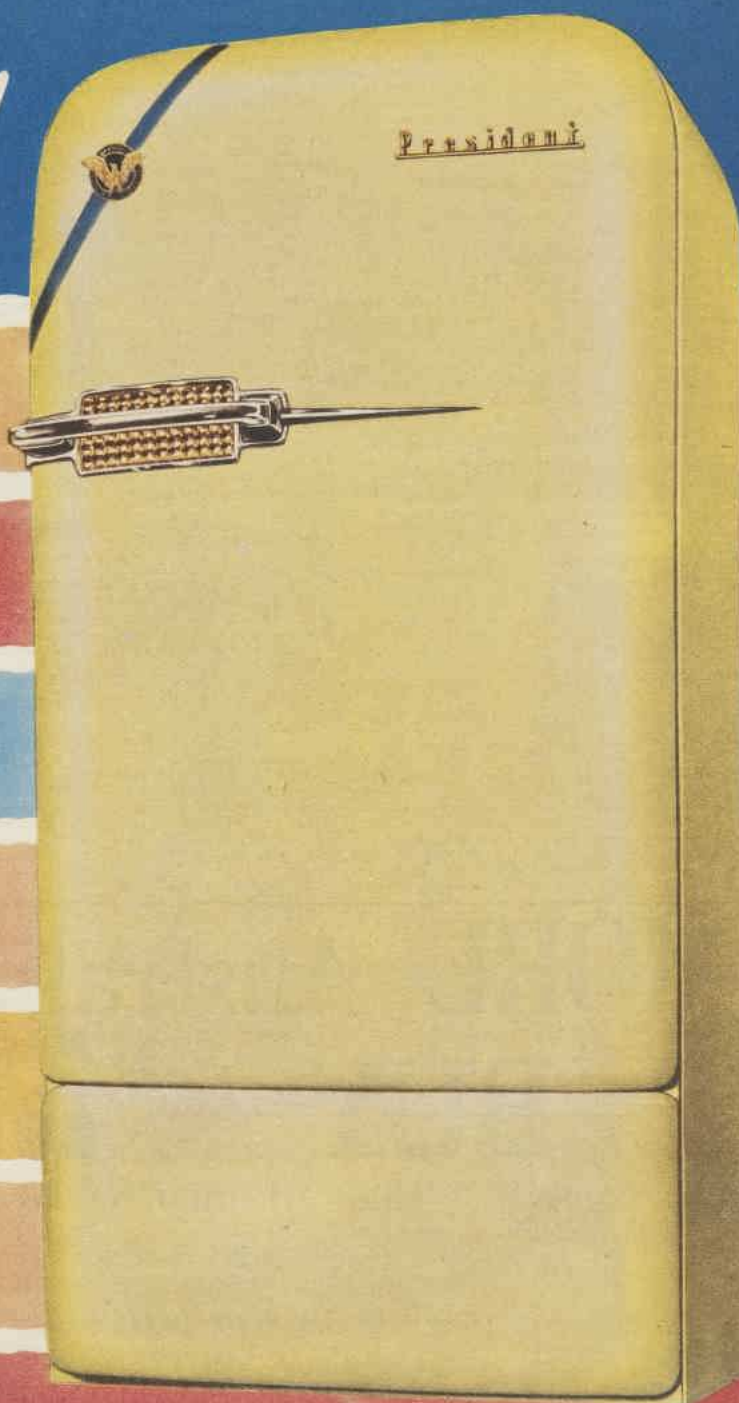


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THE AUSTRALIAN WOMEN'S WEEKLY — January 27, 1954

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Continuing Come, My Beloved

from page 51

said. "You have been very faithful to me. Livy is young, and you might have stirred her emotions to the point of no control. Instead you have been kind and strong. You have made her feel that her childish preference for you is to be forgotten. I am grateful for this, and yet I feel I should make some sort of apology, for I discern in the whole matter a fault in myself. I say that Livy is too young, and indeed she is, but if I am honest with myself as I wish to be, I know that I—that there is more than this reason for parting you."

So much Jehar had worked in him.

"Please go no further, Mr. MacArd," Jatin said. "I understand. It is natural for parents to feel that their children should marry within their own kind. Indeed, it may be this is right. At any rate, it is not my wish to insist against you. It is karma between your daughter and me. We were fated to love one another, we are fated by our birth never to marry. I know and I accept it."

"I must say more," Ted insisted. "I am a Christian, Jatin, and it may be that as a Christian I should not have such feelings. I thought I had yielded my life to my God, and yet, perhaps, I have not."

Jatin smiled. "I would not wish to accept Livy as a sacrifice to your religion."

Ted could not smile. "It is not Livy, it is I myself. I should perhaps be willing to carry the meaning of love to its ultimate. The very essence of Christian love leads us to the ultimate. I feel a failure in myself. I am not ready to face the ultimate nor to accept it."

He was surprised by the warmth in Jatin's face.

"Dear sir," Jatin said impulsively. "Please do not feel you are at fault. The love of which you speak is not only Christian, it is human, and it cannot be forced. Livy is able to feel it, but then she has been born a generation after you. I feel it, though I am not a Christian, but then I have been

born a generation after my father. I shall not marry Livy. Sir, I promise you that—it is not within my fate. Livy knows this also. But some day when Livy is married to a man of her own kind, if her child wishes to do what we have wished, then she will allow it. Time and the generations work together with fate, sir, and this is true. That is what I believe."

"You make me feel small," Ted said, and he was much troubled.

"Then I do wrong," Jatin replied. He rose to his feet. "Let us speak no more and think no more of this matter. What has been cannot be changed, and what is to be had been decided upon."

THAT night Livy came to Jatin for the last time, and that night he did not take her to his bed. Instead they talked long, in whispers, clinging to one another and at last he spoke his fear.

"If there should be a child, Livy?"

"Oh, I hope there is a child!" she cried.

"No, Livy, I hope there is not. But if there is, you must not keep him."

"I will keep him, Jatin."

"No, I forbid it. I cannot live in peace if you are burdened with a child and I cannot share the burden with you."

"But what should I do?"

"Give him away to someone else. He would be dark, like me. The darkness of our people stains the blood, Livy. Give him to the dark people in your country."

"But our child would not be a Negro, Jatin," she cried, shocked at his command.

"Hush—" he put his hand over her mouth. "Let him grow up belonging to them, since he could not belong to us. But perhaps he will never be born and that would be best, for you must be free of me, and I must be free of you, and our burden must not be laid upon a child."

This is our fate, and so it must be. Yet all that there can be we have had."

He held her at the last, knowing that only minutes remained and then he let her go. She clung to him, but he pushed her gently from him towards the door.

"Now is the end," he whispered. "It is over, and we have had everything and it shall not be taken from us. Good-bye, Livy, good-bye!"

He locked the door and stood, hearing her lean against it and sob. He wept then, but he did not yield and at last he heard her go away.

The ship pulled away from the dock, and Ted watched the receding shores of Bombay. The last night of sunset was falling from the west upon the green heights of Malabar Hill.

A tall clock tower caught the final ray and shone out the hour, and upon the street nearest the shore the colors of the garments that people wore flashed into sudden brightness, amid which the robes of Parnee priests were shining white.

He had a sense of leave-taking that was foreboding in its finality. Would he never see the shores again? Was he leaving India as his father had done, without knowing it? Was something changed in him, some virtue gone? He did not know.

He felt a touch upon his arm, and turning his head he saw Ruth at his side. Again, as so often, he saw her apart from himself, a sturdy apple-cheeked woman, neat always and now unfamiliar in a blue serge tailored suit.

"Where is Livy?" he asked involuntarily.

"Downstairs unpacking," she said. She slipped her hand into the crook of his elbow.

"Well, we have got her safely away from India," he said. The strip of water between ship and shore was widening. Twenty feet, twenty-five and soon fifty, and then the miles would mount.

"I suppose so," Ruth said.

★ As I read the stars ★ By ★ EVE HILLIARD

ARIES (March 21-April 20): January 26 may touch off a whole series of events involving hopes and wishes and accompanied by high emotional tension. Results will be known, January 28.

TAURUS (April 21 - May 20): It would be inadvisable to conclude any important business or social arrangement on January 27; adopt a wait-and-see attitude until January 29.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21): Those figuring out short journeys or holiday travel are likely to find January 27 rain-bowed with expectation. Everyone should enjoy an outing, January 30.

CANCER (June 22-July 22): Circumstances may be against you, January 27; trifles may worry you. Belongings should be safeguarded in public places. January 29 suggests success in a matter of chance.

LEO (July 23-August 22): Women should steer clear of disputes with the opposite sex on January 29. January 30 sparkles with social interests or, if you're young, brings a romantic evening.

VIRGO (August 23-September 23): Ask no favors, particularly in the business world, on January 27; also discount any rumors you may hear. January 30 is good for relaxation.

LIBRA (September 24-October 23): Don't gamble with love or money, January 29, when the stars are against you. February 1 may produce a surprise packet which delights your heart.

SCORPIO (October 24-November 22): Prospects are quite rosy on January 26 and you'll be busy with wonderful plans.

[The Australian Women's Weekly presents this astrological diary as a feature of interest only, without accepting any responsibility whatever for the statements contained in it.]

SAGITTARIUS (November 23-December 20): Minor changes in your routine can make it more colorful. Go home a different way or for-gather with neighbors, January 28. January 30 brings a brain-wave.

CAPRICORN (December 21-January 19): Watch for openings on the practical side, January 27, whether looking for a job or a bargain. On February 1 you may learn of something to your advantage.

AQUARIUS (January 20-February 19): If you're in love or eager for social popularity, January 28 may be a milestone in your progress. On February 1 look sharp where accidents are possible.

PISCES (February 20-March 20): Recognition of past efforts, perhaps a little extra money, may come your way on January 26. January 31 is excellent for correspondence.

He would not inquire what her doubt might be. He felt tired and dislocated, and perhaps he had lived in Vhai too long. For years he had poured himself out, and now he felt empty and weak.

It occurred to him that he had not eaten much in the past weeks, worried and pressed as he had been by his distress about Livy and the hurried leave-taking. It would be good to sink back into the comfortable life in the old mansion, where his father and Agnes were expecting them. He needed rest.

The dinner-gong rang through the corridors of the ship and upon the decks.

"I believe I am hungry," he said.

"Then let's go down to the dining-saloon now," Ruth said. But they lingered a moment. The sun was slipping behind the horizon of Bombay and the shadow of night stole swiftly over the city and the sea.

"I hope Livy will not wear her saris," Ted said suddenly.

"I told her not to wear them any more," Ruth replied quietly.

"Did she mind?"

"No, she said she had already decided that she would not."

So often, he thought, his conversations with his wife were commonplace, the merest question and answer, and yet he knew again that she had thoughts which she did not speak, and so there were overtones to her words. He seldom inquired what these were, and he did not do so now. A sudden breeze had arisen damp and chill.

"Come," he said. "There is nothing more here. Let us go below."

Livy, on the high upper deck, continued to gaze alone into the night. The lights of the ship fell upon the smooth and oily water of the bay, and upon the long lines of the prow of the ship.

But Livy did not see the near waters, nor even the sparkling lights of Bombay in the receding distance. Her mind's eye drove to its straight beam northward upon Vhai, and she saw Jatin in his little house alone. She knew that he would be busy as he always was, reading his books, eating his plain evening meal, and then reading again.

In an hour from now he would be at the hospital making his last rounds of the sick as they lay upon their pallets on the floor or on low wooden beds, rope-bottomed, just as they would have lain had they been in their own homes. Her father had always insisted that everything was to be Indian, he would not have anything in Vhai that was like the beautiful colleges and the hospital at MacArd, in Poona, and yet she was no longer deceived.

She had thought, oh, she had

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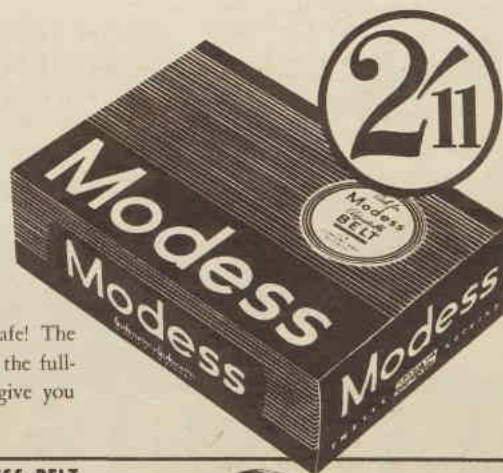
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truly believed, that her father had meant what he said when he taught them to behave courteously towards the people of Vhai and of all India, and she had believed that he meant what he said when he bade them learn the language of Vhai, and when he encouraged her to wear a sari as easily as she did a frock until a sari now seemed more natural to her, and certainly more comfortable than a buttoned frock, for to tuck the pleated material into the folds at her waist so that it hung a graceful skirt, and then to throw the other end about her shoulders was much easier than getting into sleeves and belts and buttons down the back.

He had encouraged them to play with the children of Vhai and to look upon them as brothers and sisters, telling them that God was their Father in Heaven, and they were one great family.

She had believed he meant all that and now she knew he did not. For if he had truly believed what he preached then he would have been willing and even glad for her to marry Jatin, for that was the whole acceptance, wasn't it, and if one could not accept the ultimate, then there was no real acceptance. Perhaps there was no truth in God either.

She shivered, unutterably sad as her mind fixed itself upon Jatin. It was not his fault, surely, for he had never been deceived by her father, and that had been their first great argument.

"Jatin, I tell you, my father will be happy. He likes you, and he will welcome you as his son."

This she had insisted upon and Jatin had only smiled his dark sad smile.

"Then you don't believe in my father!" She had accused him thus.

"I do believe in him," Jatin had replied. "Yet I know his soul reaches beyond the rest of him. His faith is far up yonder—" he pointed to the zenith. "But his flesh is more prudent than his soul, and it remains upon the earth. And his mind is uncertain between the two. He believes in his ideals, and he considers them necessary, but he says that it

Continuing

Come, My Beloved

from page 54

that covered his handsome body was dark, they must never be man and wife, a coating so thin though dark, that it could be pierced by a pin and underneath the flesh was as pale as her own, and the blood as red.

Yet it was the paper-thin darkness of the skin that forced them on their separate ways, on opposite sides of the world.

She did not agree, nevertheless, with all that he had decreed. There was still her hope in the child. The child, if there was a child, she would not put away as he had commanded her to do. If there was to be a child then she would go back to India somehow and insist that Jatin marry her and recognise his own son. She would not be as her father was.

PASSIONATELY, Livy knew that what she believed in she would do. Love one another, the scriptures said, and so she had loved all that was India.

She had loved Vhai and the people of Vhai, and she had loved the children and the woman, and her ayah's flesh was real to her as her own mother's. Then finally she had loved Jatin.

She clung to the rail and closed her eyes in profound entreaty. "Oh, God, if You are there, then please, please give me what I most want! Give me a baby, so that I can go back to Jatin!"

The intensity of her prayer was so great that instantly she felt sure her prayer had been heard. A soft night wind blew over her. A moment before there was no wind, and now suddenly there came the wind, a sign and promise! She opened her eyes in an ecstasy of hope, and felt the ship rise and fall beneath her feet. They were beyond the bay and out upon the sea, but she would come back, for God had heard her and He had given her the sign.

She toyed with the idea, just for a moment, of telling her mother that there would be a

child and then she decided against it. No, not yet—she might be wrong about God. It would be days before she could know.

She shivered, suddenly cold with the chill of the sea wind. She must not lose Jatin in the dark. Vhai was there, and it would always be there. Though she was being carried far away she would come back—if she was right about God.

Yet she was young and while she waited there were hours when she almost forgot. The ship's company was gay, young men and women pressed her into their games, and when they persuaded her, she sang for them the Indian songs she knew, the sweet twisting melodies of Vhai, her voice lifted high and never dropping low, but winding in and out like a brook in a valley between the mountains.

They were charmed by her and she could not but respond, for it was pleasant to be told that she was pretty, that she had a lovely voice which should be trained, that she was a natural dancer, and had the ever thought of Hollywood? She was shy, she answered their pressing, coaxing compliments in a shy little voice, her brown lashes on her cheeks and now lifted in unconscious enjoyment.

No, she had not thought of Hollywood, she did not believe her father would like it, and certainly her grandfather would not. Yes, they were going straight to New York, where they would stay in the house that had belonged to her grandfather, and yes, he was David Hardworth MacArd, and yes, she supposed he was the MacArd, though her grandfather's name was David, too.

She was so young that it pleased her to observe the slight pause that followed the speaking of this famous name, and when she got up to go away, it was with dignity added to her grace. She was the great granddaughter of the MacArd.

Yet her heart was faithful and night and morning she said her prayers, and thought of Jatin, and many times during

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the day his face came before her. She would glance at her little gold wristwatch which her father had given her last Christmas and then she would ask herself where he was now, and, wherever it was, she would see him, at work or alone.

She was still not parted from him, nor could be, so long as there was the possibility of their child.

The days passed, the ship was in mid-ocean and one morning the certainty was there. The answer was clear, there was to be no child.

She had risen early that morning, and the wind was white upon the water and the sun shining over the horizon. She had waked uncontrollably gay, for she was too young for constant sadness, and now suddenly she knew and the day stopped abruptly at dawn. She went back to bed and drew the covers about her and cried silently into the blankets so that Sara might not hear from the other berth.

But Sara heard, that sharp child, and she went and called their mother, upon pretence of visiting the bathroom, and Ruth came wrapped in her pink cotton dressing-gown and so suddenly that Livy had no

time to wipe her cheeks dry or to insist that she was not crying.

"It is just that I don't feel well," she murmured, trying not to turn her face towards her mother. But Ruth's strong hand seized her daughter's dimpled chin and pressed it towards her. "But why cry?" she asked gently.

"People do cry for nothing, sometimes," Livy said.

"Not you," Ruth retorted.

She looked down into her daughter's face and saw the eyes closed, the lips quivering. The girl was pale, she had gone through more than they knew, maybe. She remembered that as a child she, too, had always cried when they left India. And now there was Jatin, besides, and she did not know how far that had gone, but anyway Livy was safe. Love had not gone too far except perhaps in the heart, and that would heal.

"Cover yourself up real warm," she said briskly. "I'll have your breakfast brought in."

She bent and kissed her daughter's forehead, and was glad enough not to know what she had not been told. No use knowing, since nothing could be helped and whatever had been was ended.

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JOINT PAINS

"suffered very badly from... rheumatism"
Can now get about very well

Grand to be about again after being kept to the house with rheumatism and joint pains. That was Mr. J. D. F.'s experience. Read what he says:-

"I suffered very badly from . . . rheumatism. My late wife gave me a bottle of your pills and ever since then I have been a very great deal better and, whereas I could hardly walk, I can get about very well at 66 years of age."

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should warn Doty. No, she thought, shrinking. Let her find it out for herself.

"I don't know that you could call it a party. We've asked a few of our old friends in to meet you."

"Tell me about them! I love to hear about people before I see them, and then match them up to their descriptions. Any boy-friends? Dozens, I suppose. The way John described you. I knew you'd be a real glamor girl."

"The way John described me?"

"Phyllis has always been the little princess," he said. "She always gets her own way, but she's so sweet and helpless about it you're convinced you thought of it first. Isn't that just like a brother? Trying to make up my mind about you before we'd even met!"

"Typical brother's angle," I told him. "Phyllis and I will work things out for ourselves! Being friends, I mean, not just sisters-in-law." She leaned to the mirror for a careless dab of lipstick. "Any special boy-friend coming to the party?"

"No. No one special." She stood up. The baby was surfeited, half asleep. The heavy little head had a painful sweetness against her shoulder. "Shall I put him in the bassinet? I hope it's comfortable. The people across the street lent it to us."

"Oh, it's perfect! Did you see the mad poem John sent the baby when we were in the hospital? It was when your mother first wrote about us coming to see you this summer, and he put this poem in with the letter. It was supposed to be part of the invitation."

She fished in her purse and handed it to Phyllis. It was addressed to John Piper II, typed, and handsomely decorated with little pictures, of yearning relatives, arms outstretched.

"Break out of your bassinet! Get your car, put gas in it. Check up on your windshield wipers."

Hurry east to see us Pipers."

Continuing . . . John's New Wife

from page 3

There was more, and Doty stood over her, chuckling while she read it.

"Isn't it a scream? I thought your father wrote it, until John finally confessed he did. By that time we had the reservations and everything."

Phyllis looked up from the paper. "You mean if you'd known we weren't the kind of people who'd ever write verses like that you'd never have come? Because, of course, now that you've seen us you do know."

Doty turned from the mirror. Her eyes were cloudless, clear of guile. "Why, of course I'd have come! I don't expect anybody to be as clever as John. It was just that he knew how you felt, so he put it into a poem for you."

Going downstairs, Phyllis thought helplessly: She's nice! Everybody's going to like her. All Father's—and Mother's friends, our friends. Scott, too.

No one special, she had said. But Scott had been special for three years now. This was his ring that she wore, a small ruby set in an old-fashioned circle of pearls. The ring had belonged to Scott's mother, and he had given it to Phyllis at Christmas.

Casual and understated, like everything Scott did, she still had known her wanted her to wear it on the third finger of her left hand. She would not, the ring had fitted her right ring-finger, and that was where she wore it, as though it were the gift of a dear friend but without special significance.

Scott was a quiet man and steadfast. Yet he was attractive, too, with his lean, strong face and gentle smile. Some day, when she was ready for the responsibilities of marriage, Scott would be waiting for her.

Suddenly she remembered a night when Scott had brought her home from a concert, when he had not been gentle at all. He had grasped her hard by the shoulders and his voice had

been harsh and angry with love. "I'm going away, Phyllis. I'm not wanted here. You don't want me."

His unexpected violence had shaken her, and she had answered impulsively. "Oh, I do, Scott. I do! Don't go away. It's just that I'm not ready yet—not quite ready."

"Why not? What are we waiting for?"

She had had no answer. Waiting for what? The perfect moment, a ripeness of love, some mystical sign that her girlhood was over?

Scott hadn't gone away. He continued to come to the house, to take her to plays and the pictures, to lend her books. But lately he had seemed more a friend of the family. He and her father were both bookish men, and they spent hours hacking away at some obscure literary point or disputed interpretation.

Phyllis loved to listen to them. It made Scott seem so much older. Sometimes she remembered with a little shock that he was only thirty-three.

"Of course," Mrs. Piper said thoughtfully, "your father has bought her the fitted travelling case, and there's the pleated nightgown from you, but still I feel I want to give her something else. Something that has belonged in the family, for her and John to cherish and keep."

Doty had gone up after breakfast to bathe the baby, but Phyllis and her parents still lingered at the table. Mr. Piper looked up from his newspaper.

"Give her the tea service. We never use it any more."

They all looked at the sideboard, at the elaborate silver tea-set, every dimpled surface reflecting the morning light.

"You're not serious, Willfred. You know the tea service was left to Phyllis by her grandmother."

"Well, I just thought . . . John and Doty have a home

of their own now, while Phyllis—"

"Phyllis is in no hurry!" Her mother's tone was light, full of delicate, loving banter. "A mere home isn't going to satisfy Phyllis. She's going to have a castle! Princesses always live in castles."

Phyllis' coffee cup clattered into its saucer. "Mother, had you thought about the game plates? They're just as lovely as the tea-set, and heaven knows they represent family."

The game plates. They were a set of twelve, each one delicately hand-painted with a scene of wild life—wild duck, goose, pheasant—each pictured against its natural background and no two alike.

They were very old and very precious, and as long as Phyllis could remember they had reposed, wrapped separately in old linen, on the top shelf of the pantry.

Mrs. Piper frowned. "I suppose that if Phyllis has the tea-set it's only fair that John and Doty have the plates. Oh, do you think we could pack them a plane trip? All these years and not one chipped or broken! Plates are so uncertain."

Mr. Piper sounded a little testy. "I think if we're willing to risk sending our grandson by air we can risk the game plates. Some people think babies are just as valuable as heirlooms."

They were all silent, hearing the clatter of Doty's sandals on the stairs. A second later she stood in the dining-room door with the baby, naked except for a nappie, wriggling on her shoulder.

"I'm going to take him outside for a sunbath. Honestly, would you think anything this size could give you full employment night and day?" Her eyes crinkled at Phyllis. "Wait till you have one. Never a dull moment!"

In mid-afternoon, while Mrs. Piper watched anxiously over the baby's nap, Phyllis took Doty into town. At the out-

set the trip had no more purpose than to do errands and show Doty the town, but after that had been accomplished Phyllis heard herself proposing one more errand before they went home.

"I have a friend I'd like to see for a moment, a lawyer—he's in the office building across the street. He's been trying to get some music for me, phonograph records. It's beautiful stuff, but obscure—I'd like to drop in and see what luck he's had."

Very well, she'd admit it to herself. She wanted Doty to meet Scott, wanted her to see that there was someone special, after all. Of course, he was coming to the party tonight, but then he would be just another guest.

Bill Mitchell, Scott's law partner, was in the outer room when they went in. He looked up from a large, fine-printed book he was reading.

"Scott's inside. Cleaning out his desk, I guess, for the big getaway."

Phyllis smiled uncertainly. "What getaway?"

"You know this is his last day here. He leaves on the first of the week."

A shock like a little iced wind went through her. "Oh, I didn't realise. May we go in?"

She led the way into the cubicle that was Scott's private office. He was standing over the desk, riffling the pages of a calendar, and he looked at her in amazement.

"Hello, Scott. I've brought you a surprise. This is John's wife. John and Scott are old friends, Doty."

He gave them both his slow, surprised smile. "Why, Phyllis, what kind of a stunt is this—walking into a man's office in broad daylight? Aren't you afraid you'll compromise yourself?"

Before she could answer he had turned his attention to Doty. "Old John certainly did all right for himself! We used to go to school together."

"I know. You were buddies."



"Of course we're up—we've had an argument already."

John has a picture of you at home—both in bathing trunks. It's labelled Jack and the Beantstalk."

He laughed. "I remember that picture. It's a libel. It was the year I grew six inches. How's old John? I may drop in on him one of these days."

Phyllis found it hard to speak. "Bill says you're going away."

"Yes . . . yes, I am. You know, I told you a few months ago that I was thinking of it."

"But you didn't tell me now. You've said nothing—nothing—"

"No. I decided that was my trouble. I used to talk a lot and do nothing. No wonder you never took it seriously. This time I thought I'd say less and make it stick."

The arch of cold settled deeper within Phyllis. In a kind of desperation she tried to tell herself that this was a wonderful joke.

She had brought Doty here for the basest of reasons—to make a vain display of Scott's faithfulness and devotion. And here he was talking about going away forever, without any warning, as though they were bare acquaintances.

She said, "Shall we see you at the house tonight? Or will you be too busy with your packing?"

"Now, Phyllis, have I ever failed to show up at your house

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"I am writing in praise of the astounding 'Wearite' soles made by your company.

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Whilst Mrs. Jones' statement concerning the wear which these shoes have given is quite phenomenal, we are in a position nevertheless to quote you innumerable cases, only a little less sensational.

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"We have made a lot of shoes for young chaps like Keith Jones, but this is not the first time we've known a healthy young Australian to spend 16 months going through a pair of soles.

We are glad Mrs. Jones wrote to Dunlop as she did, because it also gives us an opportunity to say what we think of 'Wearite'.

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if I had any faint hope of being let in? No, seriously, there are several things on my mind. I was hoping I could take you away from your guests for a little chat."

She felt her eyes fill with tears and was furiously afraid that he would see them. She made her voice cold and clear. "But we have nothing to chat about! Going away is so final. What on earth is there to say about it—except goodbye?"

"He's so attractive," Dotty said, clattering down the stairs of the office building. "You know, I think he's interested in you. It was the expression in his eyes."

Interested! Her mind shouted soundlessly. Couldn't you see that he was mine, all mine? Or used to be?

"It's nearly five," Dotty said, frowning happily. "I've got to get home. A baby keeps better time than an alarm clock."

We could be friends, Phyllis thought. I think I need her almost as much as the baby does. She's so straight and simple and unafraid. All that I am not. I could say I've loved him for three years and never once told him so. Instead I wrote him love poetry and tore it up.

I could say—Did you ever nearly lose John? No, of course not, because you never held back from life, or tried to preserve yourself like a little figure under glass. That's what Scott called me once, but not as a compliment. He didn't mean it as a compliment.

They were stopping in front of the house. Getting out of the car, she saw herself in the rear-view mirror. The lifted chin, the arched brows, the little-princess look. No, she could never ask for sympathy, no matter how chilly dark the world looked now. Let her pride keep her warm!

Mrs. Piper was in the front hall, her face delicately flushed. "We have a few little things for you, Dotty. Birthday remembrances. We thought it would be nice if you'd open them now before dinner, before people start dropping in."

"Why, how perfectly wonder-

ful! I suppose John told you. Isn't he shameless? I'll just fly upstairs and peek at the baby—be right back!"

Mrs. Piper whispered to Phyllis as Dotty hurried upstairs. "I have the plates in the dining-room. I tried to write a verse to go with them, the way John would. All I could think of was 'These precious things for you and John will bless the board they sit upon.'"

"Why, that's lovely," Phyllis said gently. "It sounds — it sounds religious."

"I don't know why a girl like Dotty, so—so noisy and outgoing, should make me feel that way. Of course, goodness needn't be mournful and sacrificial, need it? Although so many of my generation were brought up to think that way."

Phyllis realised abruptly: Mother likes her, too—in spite of herself, in spite of Dotty's violating every rule of Mama's upbringing.

Mrs. Piper was well satisfied with Dotty's appreciation of the game plates. She wasn't content to look at two or three; she unwrapped and studied each one separately, with fresh exclamations of delight.

"Wait till I tell John—he'll be dazzled. Did I tell you he's going to telephone tonight? The old silly! Just to wish me a happy birthday. Look, this is the one I like best—what are they, pheasants. It gives me that elevator feeling in my stomach, so I know it's beautiful!"

It was Mrs. Piper who finally suggested she put away the plates. Dinner must be prompt tonight; people would be coming in soon after eight.

Obediently Dotty stacked the plates and set them on the sideboard. But she didn't wrap them again. She gathered all the wrappings into a careless heap and carried them out to the kitchen.

"You want me to stay up any longer?" Nellie asked, yawning beside the kitchen sink. "Everything's fixed and ready where you can get it."

Mrs. Piper shook her head. "You go to bed—it's past ten."

Continuing . . . John's New Wife

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Mr. Piper has just refilled the punch bowl and I won't bring out the cake and sandwiches until later."

Dotty breezed into the kitchen. "Golly, am I impressed! I never heard so many people being brilliant on so many subjects at once. Can I do something out here? You go in with the paying customers."

Mrs. Piper couldn't say that she realised Dotty felt out of things because she was so much younger than anyone else.

Instead she said, "It's a bit early for refreshments. In half an hour or so—you may help me then. But have you met the Lamberts? They'd love to hear about the West. They have a married niece in Fremantle."

She steered the girl into the living-room towards the Lamberts. At least Phyllis was having a good time! Mrs. Piper couldn't remember when she had seen her so gay.

She stood by the punch bowl sparkling with laughter at some witticism of old Mr. Van Dyke, who had courted three generations of the town's pretty girls.

Then Scott came over and put his hand on Phyllis' arm, and there was something in the gesture and in the look that Phyllis gave him that surprised Mrs. Piper.

It wasn't simple friendliness; there was a curious naked look in the wordless exchange between them. Of course, they were all fond of Scott, he was a darling; but she had never thought Phyllis had any romantic ideas about him. Yet something in Phyllis' expression at that moment flustered Mrs. Piper.

The next time she noticed Scott he was sitting by himself on the window-seat sorting over some phonograph records. Phyllis was perched on a footstool across the room, while several older people talked indulgently over her head. Dotty was missing again. Where was

she? She must speak to Phyllis about Dotty.

Then she saw Dotty beckoning from the dining-room door. She didn't look any or ill at ease; as a matter of fact, she looked pleased with herself.

"I have everything laid out on the dining-room table. It's been over half an hour. Don't you think people are getting hungry? I am!"

"Well, perhaps. It was sweet of you, dear, to go to the trouble. I'll just take a look."

She followed Dotty into the dining-room. The sandwiches were there, and the cake, and the candles had been lighted. From the kitchen she could smell coffee on the stove.

Suddenly Mrs. Piper halted as though she had been frozen. In two neat stacks, each furnished with a pink paper napkin, were the game plates!

"Why, Dotty! I set out plates for the sandwiches. The flowered ones with the scalloped edges."

"I know. I put them back. I thought it would be so lovely to use these, so everybody could enjoy them."

"Enjoy them? But I don't think you understand how valuable they are!"

Her mind spun backward. Fifteen years ago—the time they'd had the dinner-party for the relations from England—that was the last time they were used.

And before that for Phyllis' christening party. And just before Grandmother Wilkes died, when they were still in her possession, they had been brought out for Grandma's and Grandpa's golden anniversary.

Mrs. Piper looked at the silly pink paper napkin on the top plate and closed her eyes. The only napkins that had ever touched those plates had been of real linen, each one as big as a lunch cloth.

Phyllis appeared at the door. "Scott's going to put on some records. Oh, I see you have everything ready to serve. But why—"

Now Phyllis saw the plates, too. She looked at her mother.

Dotty saw the look and burst out in bewilderment. "What's the matter? Have I done something wrong? Because, heavens, all you have to do is tell me! I guess everybody's got different ways of doing things."

In a clear, abrupt voice Phyllis cried out, "Why shouldn't you have your way? The plates are yours now. I think—I think it's wonderful of you to want to share them with us!"

There was a tiny silence. Then Mrs. Piper said faintly, "If you and John are planning to use the plates often, I think I should warn you they will chip very easily."

"Oh, I'll be very careful—I won't let John wash them, ever. But I can hardly wait to get back and give a party and show them off to our friends! Heavens, I forgot the coffee."

She dashed for the kitchen, her voice floating back cheerfully. "I mean—they deserve a party! It's a crime to put beautiful things like that on a top shelf to gather dust."

"Well," Mrs. Piper murmured, holding tight to a chair back. "Times change, people change." She looked down at her small, veined hands. Her words were halting, almost embarrassed.

"Sometimes it seems that it must be delightful to be so—so untrammelled as Dotty is. Not bound by old ways of thinking, old values. I expect she's had a great influence on John. Sometimes I think it might be a good thing for you to get away, Phyllis."

"What cups do you want me to use for the coffee? These with the water-lilies on 'em be all right?"

"Why, yes. Just a minute, Dotty—I'll be out to help you."

The phone rang and Phyllis went into the study to answer it. But by the time the operator had said Perth was calling Mrs. John Piper, Dotty had streaked past her to the phone. Phyllis walked through the hall to the living-room.

"Scott," she said unsteadily, "could I interrupt you? You're wanted on the telephone, long distance."

In the hall she faced him bravely. "The call is for Dotty. I just used it as an excuse to get you away from the party."

"That was unnecessarily elaborate. All you ever need to do is whistle."

"I wanted to show you something."

She held up her left hand. The pearl and ruby ring was on the third finger. He looked at it, but he didn't speak of it.

"You know why I'm going away, Phyllis?"

"I suppose prospects for your work are better in another city."

"I'm going away because I've had enough of being cut to pieces by a girl who cludes me like a mirage every time I get close enough to touch her. Forgive my mixed metaphors."

He picked up her hand and bent it into a little fist. "What is this—this ring business? A farewell gift—a pretty little memory to take away with me?"

She shook her head. "That wouldn't be much of a gift, would it? Something to put on a shelf to gather dust."

"What, then?"

"I want to go with you. Oh, Scott, can't you see this is a proposal?"

He stared at her for a moment before his arms went about her. "Well, that's different! That's very, very different. I accept your proposal. In fact, I heartily approve of it!"

Dimly, with Scott's mouth on hers, Phyllis heard Dotty's voice ring out happily from the study. "Your family's marvellous, darling. I'm sure they like me—at least they haven't kicked me out yet. Wait till you see the presents I'm bringing home. I tell you, you'll think twice before divorcing me!"

But she would leave behind her something far more precious than any gift she could take away. Some day, Phyllis thought, I'll tell her, and I'll thank her for it.

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KRAFT CHEDDAR

Continuing . . . Am I Blue

from page 7

one of those heavy theatrical trunks, for their costumes and props, and outside, in big white letters, it said: PERKINS AND POLLY, PURVEYORS OF RHYTHM AND REPARTÉE.

I don't know why I particularly remember that. Somehow it struck me as the most pathetic thing in the whole pathetic business.

I put them in the little room I generally use for my office, and for a while I saw scarcely anything of them. The work with the scoldings took up all my days, and I only got back to the bungalow to sleep.

What they were doing with themselves all day long, I didn't know — or at least I didn't know until I went to the cupboard one night to get myself a whisky, and then I knew what he'd been doing all right. In four days he'd cleaned out half my stock.

Next morning I locked up what was left and told him what I ought to do was turn him out on the beach and let him shift for himself. He did everything but break down and cry, and swore he was absolutely on the wagon from that minute on. I knew he was as far as my liquor was concerned, but it was no more than I expected when I found him down in the village the same evening trading neckties and razor blades for this jungle juice the natives make.

The woman, Polly — that's the only name I knew her by — didn't pay any more attention to his swilling than if he had been one of the natives. I wasn't his nurse, and I was glad enough to have him out of the house, but one day I couldn't help bringing up the subject.

She didn't even look at me when she answered in that hard, flat voice of hers: "I guess that's the way he forgets his troubles."

"How do you do?" I asked her.

"I don't," she said. That was almost literally the only conversation I had with her in the first week they were with me. Day and night she used to lie out on the verandah, just looking out to sea, doing her hair or plucking at her eyebrows with some little tweezers she had, sometimes painting her toenails with scarlet polish.

Her companion would be sleeping on a bed, the inevitable bottle beside him.

Polly took care of her body with a kind of abstract mechanical instinct, like a baby holding a bottle or a cat licking its fur. She always wore an old blue kimono, but, in spite of it and for all her tiredness and hardness, she was still a good-looking woman.

The strange thing — at least, I suppose it was strange — is that I never really thought of her as a woman. After two years it wouldn't have seemed unnatural if the sight of white skin and a trim, firm figure had made me sit up and take notice. But it didn't. There was something so empty about her, so bare and clean-picked that being with her was like being with a mummy.

And yet there was something about her, even then, before the thing happened. I can't explain it, but it was there. Something dark and hard and indestructible.

I said she was empty. That's true. But it was an emptiness in which — well, in which something could happen. I found myself watching her, wondering about her.

Neither of them ever really opened up to me, but after they'd been in Botowayo a week or so I began picking up bits of their past, and it was as drab and grubby a story as you could hope to hear.

They had been working together for about twelve years, and there had been a time, apparently, back near the beginning, when they did well, and Broadway and real money

were almost within their grasp. But they never made it.

The last seven or eight years of their life had been a succession of one-night stands at down-at-heel cafes and road-houses, relief, the cubbyholes of third-rate booking agents, and a hundred rooming houses in Chicago or Akron, Denver or Des Moines.

Then came China, a six weeks' engagement. Now it was Australia. Or had been.

"Australia!" Polly repeated with that flat laugh of hers. "Ten years ago I'd have sooner played curtain-raiser at the Hoboes' Ball. Now it's the big time and we're through before we start."

This was the signal for Perkins to break down again. "We've got to get there!" he moaned. "Oh, what's going to happen to us?"

For a while, all I knew about their act was what it said on their trunk: RHYTHM AND REPARTÉE. Then one afternoon I came on to the verandah, and there she was humming at her eyebrows and plucking at her hair. I asked her what it was.

"Am I Blue?" she said.

"It's one of my numbers."

She went on humming, and, listening, I recognised the tune. "That's a real old one," I commented.

"Sure it's old, mister; it costs money for the rights to new songs."

After a while she told me a little about what they did. Perkins, it seems, was the "repartee"; he had half a dozen monologues and broke them up with juggling or a soft-shoe dance. She was the "rhythm," singing and hoofing while he accompanied her on the piano. "I'd like to see you some time," I told her, more to be polite than anything else.

"No, you wouldn't," she said. "We're the bottom." I tried to say something, but she

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cut me off with a tired wave of the hand. "Oh, I guess we used to be all right, once. That was when we were heading places, and I don't mean Botowayo, New Guinea."

"You'll get out of here all right," I reassured her.

"Sure, we'll get out of here. We'll get to Australia, and there won't be any job. We'll starve a while, and then, somehow we'll get back to the States, and there won't be any job. We'll kick around in crummy rooming houses again, and go on relief again, and cool our heels in agents' offices again, and there won't be any job."

"You musn't think like that," I told her.

"Look, mister," she said. "I'm no kid. I know how the hands are dealt. Our act is corny. We're has-beens. We'd be better off dead."

The thought struck me that as far as half their team was concerned, he was well on his way. "Have you always —" I began.

"Have you always been with that dope?" she broke in. "That's what you're going to ask. Why don't you throw him over and get yourself a decent partner?"

A tired smile crossed her face. "No, Perkins and Polly was the

way it began. Perkins and Polly is the way it's going to end."

It's necessary that I now digress for a moment and tell a little about the natives of New Guinea, for at this point they come into the story. The average white man's conception of them is that they are black and pretty savage. As far as it goes, that's true enough.

The tribes along the coast are rather tame, of course, having been in contact with white men for many years, but once you get into the interior, up the rivers and among the hills, it's something else.

I should say that many of these Guinea tribes are as completely untouched by civilisation as any people left on the earth today. Most of them are head-hunters; some are supposed to be cannibals.

The farther in you go, of course, the more wild they become. Between seventy-five and a hundred miles upriver there was, at the time of my residence in Botowayo, a group of tribes you might call half savage.

They were head-hunters, all right — I had seen some of their trophies — and even without that I don't think anyone would have mistaken them for college professors; but they maintained some contact with the coast tribes and were fairly used to white men.

There was one group in particular — the Nygassas. Every so often they loaded themselves in their canoes and came down-river to Botowayo.

Usually they brought along native woven cloth and bird-of-paradise feathers to trade. They came down three times while I was at the plantation, and the third was when I had Perkins and Polly on my hands.

On this occasion they camped down by the water on the other side of the river, and I didn't see much of them for the first few days. The Scottish missionary, Thirkill, though, was having the time of his life.

Things were pretty routine for him most of the time — all the blacks in Botowayo had long since either been converted or given up for lost, but when one of these back-country tribes came down it was virgin soil for him.

I don't know what he used to persuade them, but he succeeded in coaxing these Nygassas into his mission house, and there was something going on there nearly all the time.

When the Nygassas had been there a few days I suggested to Perkins and Polly that we go down to the mission and watch them. Neither had shown any interest in the savages until then, and they didn't show much more now.

I tried to explain that it was an opportunity they shouldn't miss; that few people in this day and age had a chance to observe close-up the lives of a truly aboriginal race. All Polly answered was that she didn't know what "aboriginal" meant and wasn't interested in finding out. And then a strange thing happened. Later that same day the Reverend Thirkill came to the bungalow and suggested the same thing.

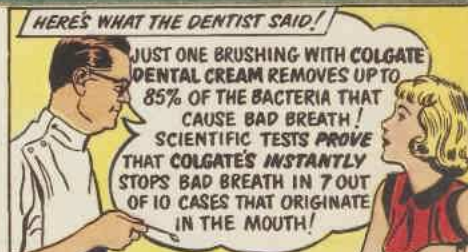
Polly looked us up and down. "What is this?" she asked. "A frame-up?"

Thirkill hemmed and hawed a little, and then he said: "I want to be perfectly frank with you. I have, I believe, been making excellent progress with the Nygassa people, but I have been having difficulty now and then in holding their attention. I understand that you and Mr. Perkins — are — er — theatrical artists."

"I know this is most presumptuous of me, but I did have the thought that if, in your goodness of heart and for the

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a moon
without
a
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sake of Christian endeavor, you would consent to visit my little mission and—well, entertain—” He broke off in embarrassment.

Polly didn't flicker an eyelash. "Is what you're talking about," she asked him smoothly, "that you want us to put on a show for the natives?"

The missionary gulped. "It would be an act of true kindness to these poor savages."

I looked at Polly, expecting a few choice remarks that would send the reverend running back to his poor savages with his hands clasped over his ears. Instead, to my surprise, a smile seemed to be playing over the straight, hard line of her lips.

"It will be the final meeting tonight," Thirkill said, taking courage. "The chief himself will be present, and I am sure that if we could vary the services with—"

Whatever else he had to say was drowned in the noise of Polly's laughter. She laughed until her whole body quivered under the blue kimono and the tears started down her cheeks. At last she sat back and looked at the astonished minister.

"Reverend," she said, "I don't know how to thank you. I never thought I'd get a laugh like that out of life again."

Thirkill arose with dignity. "I am very sorry," he said, "if I have offended you."

He turned to go, but she waved at him. "Take it easy," she said. "You haven't offended me. You've given me the biggest kick I've had in years." She looked at Perkins, but he was sitting with his head in his hands.

Suddenly she turned back to Thirkill. "Okay," she said. "You can call us a lot of things, maybe, but one thing you're not going to call us is rotten sports. We'll do it."

The missionary looked flabbergasted; then he looked confused; finally he smiled. "Truly fine!"

"Never mind the oil," she said. She looked at her part-

Continuing . . . Am I Blue

from page 60

ner again. "So the chief is going to be there? Did you hear that, stewpot?"

Perkins didn't look up.

"Perkins and Polly," she went on softly. "Favorites of the Crowned Heads of Europe, Purveyors of Rhythm and Repartee to His Imperial Majesty, the King of the Cannibal Kids."

She tried to say more, but her voice was lost in the wave of her own laughter.

They went, too. To my surprise, she kept her word, and soon after dark she, Perkins, and I walked down to the mission house. How she got Perkins into shape, I don't know, but she had done wonders.

The odds are he was still drunk, all right, but at least he understood when you talked to him, and he had brushed his suit and combed his hair until he looked almost presentable.

Polly still wore the ancient blue kimono, but she had applied her make-up carefully and looked better than I had ever seen her. We walked along without speaking, and soon we could hear Thirkill's voice coming from the mission house.

The minute we went in, I saw he hadn't been exaggerating his audiences. The place was jammed. At the far end Thirkill was standing on an improvised platform, talking in one of the Melanesian dialects.

Close beside him were several men and women from the local tribes—some of them converts, I guessed, some just those who helped him with his odd jobs. I recognized a dozen or so of the boys from the plantation. All the rest of the hall was filled with Nygassas.

In the very centre was the only chair in the place, and on it sat an old wizened black, loaded with boars' teeth and bird-of-paradise plumes. There was no mistaking that he was the chief, all right. Round about him his people were sitting and squatting and sprawling as thick as ants.

I'd seen plenty of bush savages in my two years in New Guinea, but never before so many together, and I don't

mind saying this crew was terrific.

They were tall and wore their fuzzy hair straight up in a way that made them look even taller. Their skins were hard, shiny black, but covered with tattooing and paint, and most of them had huge polished cylinders of wood distending their nostrils.

Men and women alike wore only small loticloths and long necklaces of teeth and feathers. All the young men carried spears. In the narrow confines of that meeting hall, under the yellow glare of the electric bulbs, they formed as weird and terrifying a company as you could find anywhere on earth.

Suddenly Polly spoke. "Guess we've clicked at last," she said. "Our first capacity house in ten years."

Looking down, I saw in astonishment that she and Perkins were holding hands.

WE stood at the back of the hall while Thirkill went on with his sermon. I don't know how many of the Nygassas were listening, but they were remarkably well behaved.

Presently Thirkill finished speaking and beckoned us to come up beside him. As we threaded our way forward, the crowd eyed us with stolid indifference.

The missionary was saying something to the effect that instead of the usual hymn they would now have the pleasure of seeing how the servants of the Great White Master danced and sang. When Perkins and Polly finally reached the platform, he greeted them as if they were visiting royalty.

The next few minutes were taken up with preliminaries. The platform was cleared of converts and assistants, who disdainfully took places among the Nygassas below. Thirkill pointed out a battered portable organ and told Perkins and Polly to make whatever use of it they wished. Then he ges-

tured to the crowd for silence.

Perkins sat down at the organ, elicited a few preliminary bleats, and began his act.

It was not, I'm afraid, a very good act, either by Nygassa standards or otherwise. First he pounded out a couple of popular songs, trying to keep the organ to a piano tempo, but not succeeding.

Then he took four balls from his pocket and juggled them. Finally, he did a routine of tap steps, whistling his own accompaniment.

It was not that he was bad that surprised me—I had expected that; it was the complete and incredible ease of his badness.

One would have thought that under those fantastic circumstances there would at least have been a certain sparkle or nervousness to his performance. But there was none.

He went through his numbers with the same fixed smile and the same routine pattern that he must have used in a hundred dingy cafes on a thousand dingy nights. Nothing happened inside him. There was nothing there.

When he sat down, the black and painted faces below turned blankly to Thirkill to see what they should do. He put on his best Sunday School smile and clapped noisily. A few of them followed suit.

Perkins returned to the organ and Polly came on to the platform. A quick shock of surprise went through me when I saw that she had shed her kimono and was now dressed in a costume which she had apparently put on beneath it before leaving the bungalow.

It was rather a shabby costume of red satin, frayed at the hem and stained with dry sweat. Its only ornament was a wide rhinestone belt.

Perkins hit a few tentative notes on the organ and she began to sing. I forget what the song was—some shopworn ballad of a few years back—but I remember a feeling of disappointment at the way she did it.

Her voice was fair enough in

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Beauty in brief:

STEPS TO BEAUTY

By CAROLYN EARLE

● For most women the constant use of three or four beauty preparations for skin care and make-up is sufficient reassurance that they are being intelligent about face decoration.

AT the other end of the scale are those who wouldn't dream of stepping outdoors without full-scale make-up.

As a matter of general interest, here is the step-by-step procedure to achieve lasting make-up:

- ★ Apply cleansing cream generously over the face and throat.
- ★ Cleanse for a few minutes with upward, rotating motion.
- ★ Remove all traces of oil from pores with tissues, gentle soaping, and swab with skin freshener.
- ★ Smooth skin sparingly with cream, liquid, or cake make-up foundation.
- ★ Blend foundation evenly all over.
- ★ Affix eye-shadow heaviest at the lash line and fading to a minimum at the eyebrows.
- ★ A cream rouge comes next. Pat, do not rub, this cosmetic.
- ★ Powder first under the eyes, holding apart squint and laugh lines to avoid creases.
- ★ Powder the remainder of the face and neck by pressing it into the foundation.
- ★ Remove excess powder with a special brush or piece of cotton-wool.
- ★ Moisten a towel in cool water and pat the complexion gently to give a smooth, natural-looking sheen to make-up.
- ★ Restore sheen to eye-shadow with petroleum jelly or water.
- ★ With soft eyebrow pencil, outline the lash line of the upper lid only.
- ★ Touch mascara only to upper lashes.
- ★ Achieve smooth lips and clear, definite outlines with a deft lipstick brush.
- ★ Tilt lip corners (with the lip brush) for a youthful, smiling appearance.
- ★ Blot mouth with tissue to remove excess lipstick and check evenness of pattern on tissue imprint.
- ★ Place a dusting finish of dry rouge on the high-point of each cheek.

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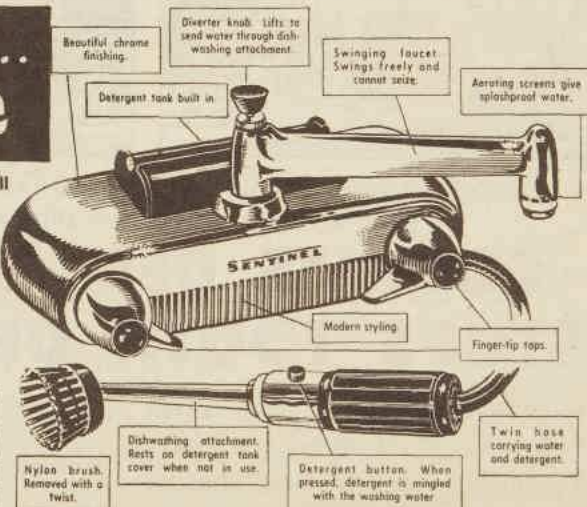
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No. 600.—TABLE CENTRE

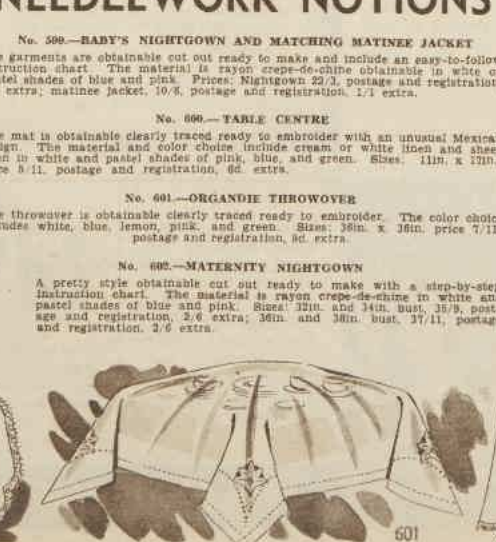
The mat is obtainable clearly traced ready to embroider with an unusual Mexican design. The material and color choice include cream or white linen and sheer linen in white and pastel shades of pink, blue, and green. Sizes: 11½in. x 13½in., price 5/11, postage and registration, 6d. extra.

No. 601.—ORGANDIE THROWOVER

The throwover is obtainable clearly traced ready to embroider. The color choice includes white, blue, lemon, pink and green. Sizes: 36in. x 36in., price 7/11, postage and registration, 6d. extra.

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a low, husky way, but there was no more spirit or animation than there had been in Perkins' performance.

The song over, she tapped for a few minutes, turned a cart-wheel or two, and ended with a series of kicks. The blacks again looked to Thirkill for their cue, and a scattering of them followed him in his clapping.

The next number was "Am I Blue?" She sang it very low and slow, and at first almost all I could hear was Perkins picking out an occasional right note on the organ. Only half listening, I let my eye wander out among the dark, sprawling forms of her audience.

I remember clearly the first hint I had that something had changed. I had been watching a huge tattooed warrior who sat cross-legged on the floor a few feet from the chief.

His spear was propped against one shoulder; his body was motionless and his face expressionless. And then, suddenly, I saw that one of his hands had begun to move slightly. Without his being conscious of it at all, it tapped softly against his black, naked thigh. A moment later his other hand did likewise.

I looked back at Polly. She had sung the song through once and was beginning it for the second time, and as far as I could see there was no difference. Or was there a difference?

Her voice was still very low, but somehow it seemed to fill the room a little more. Or perhaps it was that she had slowly begun to tap her feet to the rhythm of her singing. Or that her body was swaying slightly at the waist.

The tapping grew louder. It was a deeper, more resonant sound than two small rhotone slippers could produce. My glance shot back towards the tattooed warrior, but never reached him. All over the hall

Continuing . . . Am I Blue

from page 62

the Nygassas were swaying gently to the song. With hands and feet they were beating out the rhythm.

"Am I blue? Am I blue?" I recognised the thrush-like words, but words had no part in what I suddenly realised, had begun to happen in that hall. Polly was dancing now.

At first it was only a tentative step or two, a slight elaboration of her tapping accompaniment. Then slowly her whole body was set in motion. Her feet beat strongly on the rickety wooden platform; her arms, her legs, her shoulders, and her head danced.

They were all a part of the pattern of her movement, but her voice was almost inaudible under the thumping of the organ and five hundred hands and feet. In a few moments even the organ seemed to fade.

Perkins was still working at the keys, but its notes were lost in the rising swell of sound. Every black in the hall was pounding away now, some still on their thighs, some heavily on the floor.

And presently I became aware of still another sound, deeper, more reverberant than any before. Nygassas scattered about the hall began to beat on their drums.

Their hollow, menacing tones rose slowly until they filled the room like measured thunder. A few of the savages had leaped to their feet and stood jerking their bodies to the rhythm. The beat grew faster.

But the incredible thing was this woman, Polly. I had half expected her to stop when the excitement began, but instead she increased the tempo of her dancing to keep pace with the pounding of hands and drums. Indeed, it was impossible to tell whether it was she who took

the beat from them, or they from her.

By this time the place was in an uproar. Every black buck in the hall was on his feet, stamping and swaying. Even the old chief was beating the floor with his chair. From somewhere in the rear a chant began, and in a moment it filled the mission house with its savage wail.

Perkins, roused from his lethargy at last, was jerking and pumping at the organ like a man possessed. But not a note came through the din. Thirkill jumped on the platform, shouting and gesturing for order, but a dozen black hands pulled him roughly down.

STILL the woman danced. Never in my life will I forget the picture of her: her body swaying and throbbing, her arms and legs flashing unbelievably white against that howling, weaving background of black savages.

She danced with her eyes closed, but her face was alive with an emotion so strong that I was almost afraid to look at it.

I don't think I have ever seen a human being stripped so naked and, in a way, so clean. It was as if all the drabness and hopelessness of the years were being washed away in one great flood of savage release.

Her body throbbed faster and faster, her limbs threw themselves about more wildly, and the whirling and shrieking of the black men still swelled. I could no longer distinguish the pounding of the drumbeats from the pounding of my blood.

That's the end of it really. The next day the Nygassas

were gone, and Perkins and Polly were gone, too.

When Thirkill went down to the river in the morning, the savages had broken camp. He was told by some of the local blacks that they had manned their canoes and headed upstream during the night.

It wasn't until later in the day that we discovered Perkins and Polly had disappeared. Then we turned the village upside down. But they were gone. There was no clue of any kind, but the only possible supposition was that the Nygassas had taken them. Whether dead or alive, I didn't know.

The next day, Thirkill and I, along with a native constable, started up-river. The tribes along the lower stretch claimed to know nothing; said they had not even seen the Nygassas go by. When we got about seventy-five miles in, near Nygassa country, we began hearing war drums and turned back.

A week later the Dutch ship came in. We told the captain the story, and he took pages of notes and promised to report the matter to the authorities when he returned to Batavia. That was in August.

In November a sergeant of the Dutch Colonial Police showed up, and, after asking a lot of questions, organised a sort of safari and went up-river. He got as far as the Nygassas all right, but he found nothing and heard nothing.

Months went by. I had long since been convinced they were dead, and the whole fantastic story was relegated to a dark corner of my memory. And then the final thing happened. The incredible thing.

In the spring of last year an expedition came into Botswana, a party of anthropologists from a London museum. They came down-river and said they



had crossed the entire width of New Guinea.

Naturally, I told them the story of Perkins and Polly and questioned them carefully, in the hope that I might uncover some chance hint of what had happened. But they had seen or heard nothing that threw any light on the mystery.

At last, the very night before they left, something happened by the merest accident. I was visiting over at their camp, and one of them was playing some recordings he had made of tribal songs and ceremonies.

They were from a hill tribe of headhunters, he explained, far up in the interior, beyond the Nygassa country, which, to his knowledge, had never before been visited by white men.

The first records I heard were what one might expect—the familiar chanting and drum beating of primitive races. Then he played another, and suddenly I found myself sitting there with not a muscle moving and cold sweat creeping over my body.

For underneath all the thumping and yelling of the savages, what that record was

playing — I swear to it — was "Am I Blue?"

Still the members of the expedition could tell me nothing. Until I heard the record, they had not recognised it as anything but a typical primitive chant.

They told me it had been performed for them by a group of almost a hundred savages. All of them, they said, were painted and tattooed. All of them looked alike.

I sat with the Englishmen until late that night. We refilled our glasses when they were empty and listened to the soft jungle sounds that came to us through the darkness.

For a long time we didn't speak. There seemed to be nothing left to say. And then, at last, one of them expressed the thought that must have been uppermost in all their minds, as it was in my own. "I wonder if the Nygassas took them," he said. "Or if they went because they wanted to."

"I've told you all that I know," I replied. "Your guess now is as good as mine."

(Copyright)

WANT CHILDREN'S CLOTHES TO LAST LONGER?

"THEN USE VELVET SOAP," say these two thankful mothers.

Mrs. E. HICKEY
Mother of 6

Mrs. J. WILSON
Mother of 2

With children's clothes getting dearer all the time, let these two sisters, Mrs. Hickey of 15 Cavella Ave., Rhodes, N.S.W., and Mrs. Wilson of 22 Harrington St., Marrickville, N.S.W., show you how they get extra-long wear from kiddies' clothes by using good pure Velvet.

"Now take this frock which belonged to my Kath here," said Mrs. Hickey. "Velvet has kept it so strong and new-looking that it can be handed down to my sister's little Carol." "It doesn't look 9 years old, does it, Aunt Jenny?" adds her sister.

Doesn't Baby Bernadette look happy? The reason? Soft, fluffy, Velvet-washed nappies, for one thing. "Honestly, Aunt Jenny, keeping 6 children clothed these days takes some doing," said Mrs. Hickey. "But Velvet helps no end!"

"Aren't they sweet!" smiled Aunt Jenny. "But they'll have their clothes filthy in an hour," answered Mrs. Wilson. "Just as well Velvet saves us work! It cleans the extra-grimy parts without much rubbing—I suppose that's why things last so long."



Take the advice of two mothers who know! Use gentle Velvet for everything you wash. Velvet gives more extra-soapy suds faster and that means less rubbing and longer life to your clothes. Kind to your hands, too.

ASK FOR THE BIG ECONOMY BAR

FAMILY HOME CONTEST

More than £3000 to be awarded

Our Family Home Contest has aroused great interest among amateur home planners and readers are already asking questions on points that puzzle them.

ARCHITECTS have also telephoned to ask about the reprinting of qualifications and the schedule of requirements for their section. These will not be repeated in every issue, but copies of the announcement in the issue of January 13 are still available at our offices in all States.

Architects are given a choice of three sites on which to design a house of not less than 12 squares, nor more than 20 squares, one or more stories high.

Architectural students may enter this section.

First award in each section is £1000, and in the amateur section there are three other prizes of £100, and in the professional section five other premiums of £100.

Progress awards for plans published during the course of

the contest will bring the prize-money to well over £3000.

Some amateurs have asked about the total area of the house—1600 square feet, or 16 squares. A square is ten feet by ten feet. Multiply the length by the breadth of your rooms or hallways and that will give you area in square feet.

Add these amounts and you will get the total number of square feet on your floor plan. Calculations by amateurs are not required to be strictly accurate. A variation of a few feet would not disqualify your plan.

You are not asked to calculate wall thicknesses, because materials to be used would vary greatly.

You may find it easier to work with squared paper, but this is not essential. Remember that the plan is just a simple outline of the floor space of a family home, and

that anyone with practical knowledge of the needs of a family can draw it.

The contest will close on March 26 at 12 noon, to enable judging to proceed and

models of winning entries to be made in time for the exhibition to be held at the Fourth Australian Architectural Exhibition, 1954, at the Town Hall, Sydney, in May.

Amateur section

Entrants are required to draw the ground plan of a three-bedroom home for a family of five with the sizes of the rooms indicated and the positions of windows and doors marked.

The house shall not contain more than 1600 square feet of floor area on one or more stories, excluding terraces, porches, and verandahs.

Site of the home is a corner block of land with an 80ft. street frontage facing east and 100ft. street frontage facing north.

The position of the main items of furniture in each room must be shown.

Draw your plan on one piece of paper, not larger than 15in. x 22in. Smaller sheets may be used.

Contest conditions

Please read the following conditions carefully to ascertain if you are eligible to compete.

No person who earns a living, or has ever earned a living, as an architect, architectural designer, draughtsman, builder, or interior decorator may enter the amateur section of this competition.

Finalists will be required to sign a statutory declaration that their plan is their own unaided work and that they have not had advice or help from any architect, architectural designer, draughtsman, builder, or interior decorator.

No member of the staff or relative of a member of the

staff of Consolidated Press Ltd. may enter this contest.

Prizes will be awarded in accordance with the judges' views of the relative merits of the entries received. The decision of the judges will be final, and each competitor will enter the competition on that basis.

Exclusive publication rights in all entries shall belong to Consolidated Press Ltd.

Entries should be addressed to the Editor, The Australian Women's Weekly, Box 4088WW, G.P.O., Sydney, and should be marked Family Home Contest.

THE PRIZES

Amateur section

First prize for floor plan : £1000

Three prizes £100 each for the plans judged next best.

★ Progress prizes for plans considered of sufficient interest to publish will be awarded in the amateur section.

THE PREMIUMS

Professional section

For the best design entered . . . £1000

Five premiums of £100 for plans judged next best.



Here's the easiest ever ICE-CREAM RECIPE ... creamier tasting too!

This is the Carnation recipe women are talking about. It's so delicious, so quick and economical that other ice-cream recipes are out-of-date!

No need to beat during freezing

1 tin Carnation Milk chilled; 3 level tablespoons sugar (caster preferred); 1 teaspoon vanilla; 1 level teaspoon gelatine; 1 tablespoon boiling water. (Serves 8-10).

Chill Carnation Milk in refrigerator tray till crystals form round the edge. Dissolve gelatine in boiling water. Whip Carnation until stiff about 2 minutes. Add sugar, vanilla and dissolved gelatine. Whip again until thoroughly mixed. Freeze rapidly in refrigerator trays. For variety, flavour with 2 tablespoons of chopped fresh fruit.



Double-rich Carnation Milk has so many uses..



Carnation Milk is country-fresh whole milk condensed to double-richness. It is in convenient liquid form, and when undiluted, looks and tastes just like cream. For every milk purpose... cooking and table... use half Carnation and half water. With Carnation in your kitchen you'll never be

short of milk and cream—not even over holidays or in hot weather. When you're camping or picnicking, take plenty of Carnation along and be sure of good, pure milk. Unopened tins keep indefinitely, opened, it keeps as long as good fresh milk.

Carnation Milk

"from Contented Cows"

Look for it at your grocer's—in the tall red and white tins!

COOK'S CORNER

You can't have Carnation Ice-cream too often for the family. Especially when you "ring the changes" by serving it with these delicious sauces.



CHOCOLATE SAUCE

4 oz. dark chocolate, ½ cup sugar, ½ cup Carnation Milk. Grate chocolate and dissolve in double sauce-pan over hot water. Add milk and sugar and stir till blended. Serve hot or cold over ice-cream or on puddings. Fine for flavouring Milk Shakes, too.

CARAMEL SAUCE

1 cup brown sugar, ½ cup Carnation Milk; ½ teaspoon butter. Combine ingredients, cook for 3 minutes in double sauce-pan. Serve hot or cold over ice-cream, or with puddings.

CARNATION FRUIT FLUMMERY

No "toiling over a hot stove" to make this luscious cold sweet! No eggs or butter needed, either!

1 tin Carnation Milk, 1 level tablespoon gelatine, ½ cup boiling water, ½ cup sugar, 1 cup of tinned crushed pineapple, or alternatively, 6 passion fruit, or 1 cup of crushed fresh berry fruit, or stewed fruit strained of juice, finely chopped or sieved.

Chill Carnation Milk in freezing tray of refrigerator or on ice. Chill bowl and beater for whipping. Dissolve gelatine in hot water. Allow to cool till thick but not set. Whip chilled Carnation Milk till stiff... about 2 minutes. Add sugar and whip for 1 minute. Add dissolved gelatine and whip again. Fold in fruit. Chill until time to serve.

PASTE THESE IN YOUR RECIPE BOOK!

A Betty King Recipe Feature

NOTED HOME ECONOMIST OF WORLD BRANDS PTY. LTD.



**Velvety, creamy desserts
for only pennies a serve!**

CARAMEL SUPREME

1 packet Caramel Mellah, 1 pint milk,
whipped cream, 2 passionfruit.

Here's how! Prepare melt-in-the-mouth Caramel Mellah from directions on the packet. Chill. Then pile with feathery fluffs of whipped cream and a tempting topper of passionfruit and serve. Makes 4 to 6 heavenly helpings.



**A full quart of
creamy delicious ice cream**

FROM JUST ONE PACKET OF MELLAH!

Chocolate! Vanilla! Caramel! You have the choice of these three luscious flavours when you make ice cream with Mellah. Wonderfully economical too — from just one packet of Mellah you get a full quart — two refrigerator trays full of the smoothest home-made ice cream in your favourite flavour.

MELLAH ICE CREAM

This is the quick'n'easy basic recipe!

Cook 1 packet Mellah in your favourite flavour with milk, as directed on package.

Stir in 2 level tablespoons sugar.

Mix in *one only* of the following:
½ cup evaporated milk (Carnation Brand or other similar unsweetened condensed milk) or ¼ cup fresh cream.

Pour into freezing tray.

Freeze till set to about ¾ in from sides of tray.

Beat till thick and creamy and twice original volume.

Freeze quickly till firm, then adjust refrigerator control to keep the ice cream firm without over-freezing.

Top with chocolate or caramel sauce . . . crown with blushing berries . . . fruit in season . . . or crushed nuts . . . we leave it to you!

CHOCOLATE SWIRL

1 packet Chocolate Mellah, 1 pint milk,
2 bananas.

What to do? Just prepare creamy Chocolate Mellah from easy directions. Cool. Pour into glasses and ruffle the surface boldly with a few swirls of a spoon. Then chill. A second before serving, garland with ripe banana rings. Simply wonderful . . . wonderfully simple . . . and plenty for 4 to 6 delighted people.



BERRIES ON VELVET

1 packet Vanilla Mellah, 1 pint milk, any
red berries (fresh, stewed, or preserved).

Blissfully easy! Make up velvety Vanilla Mellah as directed on packet. Stud its golden goodness with berries. Then chill. So impressive . . . yet so simple . . . yields 4 to 6 mouth-watering servings! (Just as good with apricots, pears, prunes or peaches!)



Taste that Chicken! TASTE CONTINENTAL

THE SOUP THAT MAKES A SUMMER MEAL

Salads and suchlike are all very well, but often not enough, alone, for really hearty eaters. So why not start your cold meal this summer with one hot dish? And to give your family and yourself a break, make that dish Continental Chicken Noodle Soup! Taste that chicken in all its golden goodness . . . taste those plump savoury egg noodles! One silvery packet of Continental brand makes 4 generous servings, in only 7 minutes.



You're sure of the products recommended by BETTY KING

Address any correspondence to Betty King, Box 2625, G.P.O., Sydney.



Pantry shelves stocked with a good variety of bottled fruits bring the color and warmth of summer into menus all the year round, and solve many catering problems when fruits are out of season.

Stock the pantry shelves

This is the season for preserving summer fruits for out-of-season use, so make the most of summer's bounty now.

BOTTLING fruit is a simple task if you follow the instructions carefully and process it for the required length of time.

For bottling you will need firm, ripe fruit, sugar syrup, jars, rubber rings, clip-on tops or screw tops, a water bath or large boiler or laundry top with a wooden or metal stand in the bottom, a sharp stainless knife. A thermometer if available is a help, but is not essential.

Prepare heavy, medium, or light syrup, boil 10 minutes, strain into a large jug. Wash bottles thoroughly in hot water and drain.

Prepare fruit as follows:

Leave apricots and plums unpeeled. Peel, core, and quarter apples and quinces, drop into salted water to preserve color. Peel, core, and slice or dice papaw and pineapple. Peel, halve, and core pears, drop into salted water. Immerse peaches 2 minutes in boiling water, slip skins off by rubbing with the fingers.

Pack firmly into jars, and fill completely with syrup.

If using jars with clip-on tops, carefully adjust rubber rings. Clamp lid down firmly with clip. Screw tops should be rested lightly on top of jars. Stand filled jars on rack in water bath.

Fill water bath with cold water up to the neck of the smallest jar—this will be sufficient coverage for the larger bottles. Bring water very slowly to heat required, taking at least 1 hour. Keep temperature steady for the required time (see timetable). If processing without a thermometer bring to boiling point, taking 1 to 1½ hours, simmer required time. Tighten screw tops.

Remove jars carefully from water bath, stand on rack out of draughts.

Test seal next day. Remove clips, lift jars by the lid. If lid remains firmly in place and no hissing sound is heard, the seal is airtight. Invert screw-top bottles and watch for leakage of syrup or air bubbles. If seal is not correct bottles must be processed again or contents used immediately. Label and date bottles and store in a cool place.

TIMETABLE

FRUIT	With Thermometer. (Count time from when water boils.)	Without Thermometer.
APRICOTS	160 deg. F., 2½ hours.	20 minutes.
PLUMS	160 deg. F., 2½ hours.	20 minutes.
PEACHES	180 deg. F., 2½ hours. (allow to drop to 160 deg. F.)	20 minutes.
PEARS	200 deg. F., 2½ hours. (allow to drop to 180 deg. F.)	25 minutes.
PINEAPPLE	190 deg. F., 2½ hours. (allow to drop to 170 deg. F.)	30 minutes.
PAPAW	200 deg. F., 2½ hours. (allow to drop to 180 deg. F.)	25 minutes.
FIGS	180 deg. F., 2½ hours. (allow to drop to 160 deg. F.)	30 minutes.
GRAPES & BERRIES	160 deg. F., 2½ hours.	20 minutes.
CHERRIES	170 deg. F., 2½ hours.	20 minutes.
QUINCES	200 deg. F., 2½ hours. (allow to drop to 180 deg. F.)	35 minutes.
RHUBARB	170 deg. F., 2½ hours.	10 minutes.
FRUIT SALAD	170 deg. F., 2½ hours.	20 minutes.
STRAWBERRIES	160 deg. F., 2 hours.	15 minutes.

BOTTLING QUIZ

ARE jars with patent tops necessary?

Jars with specially fitted vacuum lids and rings, or with specially fitted screw tops, give best results.

SHOULD fresh rubber rings be used on bottles each time they are used?

Yes. Rubber rings act as a suction pad and keep the seal airtight. They are not satisfactory used a second time.

IS a thermometer essential in the hot-water bath method of processing?

No. Water may be brought slowly to boiling point and maintained at simmering point during the time for processing, which is calculated from when the water boils.

IS it necessary to use syrup in bottling fruit?

No. Water can be used without appreciably affecting the keeping quality of the fruit, but the fresh fruit flavor is better preserved if sugar is added. If fruit is bottled in water sugar will be needed when the fruit is served.

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Good recipes win prizes

Favorite recipes from readers in four different States win prizes in our popular recipe competition this week.

THE hot savory dish which wins the main prize of £5 has a basis of vermicelli, tantalisingly flavored with bacon and garlic. A piquant tomato and bacon sauce, poured over the vermicelli before serving, makes it a very appetising dish.

Consolation prizes go to sweets, cherry crumb pudding, pineapple dessert, and savory stuffed marrow.

All spoon measurements in our recipes are level.

VERMICELLI WITH BACON AND TOMATO SAUCE

Eight ounces vermicelli, bacon bones or rind, 2 cloves

garlic, 1 large onion, 1 tablespoon butter or substitute, 1 bacon rasher, 2 cups sieved cooked tomatoes or tomato puree, salt and pepper, 4oz. cheese.

Cook vermicelli with bacon bones or rind and clove of garlic in boiling salted water until quite tender, drain well. Meanwhile prepare sauce. Chop onion, fry gently in butter or substitute, add chopped bacon rasher and chopped clove of garlic, continue cooking 3 to 4 minutes. Add sieved cooked tomatoes or puree, season with salt and pepper. Cover and allow to cook over very low heat until vermicelli is ready. Fold grated cheese into tomato mixture, serve spooned over vermicelli.

First Prize of £5 to Mrs. J. Edwards, 11 Fisher Ave., Pennant Hills, N.S.W.

PINEAPPLE DESSERT

One tin pineapple, 1 packet pineapple jelly crystals, 2 eggs, 1 pint milk, 2 dessertspoons cornflour, 2 tablespoons sugar. Drain pineapple, reserving syrup. Cut pineapple into small pieces, place in serving dish. Blend cornflour with a little of the milk. Heat balance of milk, add sugar and cornflour, stir until boiling, cook 2 to 3 minutes. Add beaten egg-yolks, mix well, allow to cool. Pour over pineapple. Add water to syrup to make up to 1 pint. When boiling, add jelly crystals, stir until dissolved. When cold and beginning to thicken, fold in

stiffly beaten egg-whites. Pile on to custard, chill until set. Serve with cream.

When passionfruit are in season the pulp of 1 or 2 may be added either to the custard or the jelly.

Consolation Prize of £1 to Mrs. E. Poulgrain, 42 Betheden Terrace, Ashgrove, Qld.

CHERRY CRUMB PUDDING

One pound cherries, 1 cup water, 1 cup sugar, juice of 1 lemon, 1 1/2 cups milk, 1 teaspoon butter or substitute, 1 cup fine white breadcrumbs, 2 eggs, 1 teaspoon grated lemon rind.

Wash cherries, remove stones (if desired), cook until tender with water, sugar, and lemon juice. Pour into greased ovenproof dish. Heat milk, shortening, and breadcrumbs until breadcrumbs are swollen. Remove from heat, add beaten egg-yolks and lemon rind. Fold in stiffly beaten egg-whites. Pour over cherries, bake in moderate oven 30 to 40 minutes.

Consolation Prize of £1 to O. B. Lawson, c/o Town Hall, Launceston, Tas.

SAVORY STUFFED MARROW

One medium-sized marrow, 4oz. lean bacon, 4oz. grated cheese, 1lb. tomatoes, 1 small onion, 1 egg, 1 cup soft white breadcrumbs, melted shortening, extra grated cheese.

Chop bacon (rind removed) and onion, cook gently in heavy pan until onion is tender. Remove from fire, add chopped, skinned tomatoes, beaten egg, cheese and breadcrumbs, mix well. Peel marrow, cut in halves lengthwise. Scoop out seeds, fill each half with savory mixture. Join both halves together, secure with

SAVORY stuffed marrow, with peas, baked potatoes, and tomato, is nourishing and satisfying for lunch or dinner. See consolation prize-winning recipe on this page.

cocktail sticks. Place on greased oven tray, brush with melted shortening, top with extra grated cheese. Bake in moderate oven 1 to 1 1/2 hours until marrow is tender. Remove cocktail sticks, serve sliced.

Consolation Prize of £1 to Mrs. H. S. Watson, 221 Waterdale Rd., Ivanhoe, Vic.

Kitchen Hints

STEWED apple, delicately flavored with Worcestershire sauce and, of course, cooked with a few cloves, makes a good substitute for chutney to serve with a curry.

COLD, cooked potatoes, sliced, brushed with melted shortening or bacon fat and grilled, are good with steaks, grills, and fish dishes.

BUTTERSCOTCH sauce, flavored with ginger (1 teaspoon to 2 cups), is delectable

table over vanilla ice-cream. Serve with wafer biscuits.

TO convert cold stewed fruit into a hot pudding at short notice, top with a layer of sweet scone dough sprinkled with sugar and cinnamon. Bake and serve hot with custard or cream.

CHOPPED raisins added to beef stews, hamburger steak, or meat croquettes improve the flavor and add extra nourishment, too.

Stock the pantry shelves

continued from page 67

WHAT causes liquid to boil out of jars during processing?

Jars packed too solidly or too full; boiling too rapidly at too high a temperature. Does not affect keeping quality provided seal is perfect when jar is cool.

ARE chemicals or preserving powders required for bottling? Definitely no.

WHY do some fruits float from the bottom of the jar?

Over-ripe fruit may have been used, insufficient fruit may have been packed in the bottles or the bottles may have been processed too long at too high a temperature.

HOW long will home-processed food keep?

It should keep indefinitely, but quality sometimes deteriorates after twelve months. Always date jars and use first the food which was preserved first.

SHOULD jars be filled to overflowing with syrup?

Jars should be filled quite full to the top with water or syrup. Add to bottles slowly to allow air to escape, so that fruit at the top of the jar will still be covered after sterilising.

WHAT are the signs of spoilage in the jar?

A bulging lid, gas bubbles, oozing liquid, mould, off-normal odor or color, liquid spurting when lid is removed.

WHAT is meant by heavy syrup, medium syrup, light syrup?

Heavy syrup, 1 cup sugar to 1 cup water; medium syrup, 1 cup sugar to 2 cups water; light syrup, 1 cup sugar to 3 cups water. Boil sugar and water together 10 minutes, strain before using.

CAN more liquid be added to fill a jar after it has been processed?

No. If the jar is opened re-processing is necessary.

IS the boiling of preserved food necessary before using?

Veg. tables (except tomatoes), and all meats should be boiled before using—be on the safe side.

Are you in the know?

When he admires your dress, do you say ...

- ☐ Really, this old sock?
☐ Are you kidding? ☐ Thank you?

Some girls imagine they must shrug off a compliment. Such tactics embarrass a fellow. When he tosses a bouquet your way—catch it. Sweetly say "Thank you". Giving out with the right answers is a mark of poise. And there's another answer that makes sure of poise on "calendar days". That's Kotex. Kotex is thicker, where it matters—wonderfully absorbent, with an exclusive moisture-proof panel embedded deep in the centre. There's no wrong side to wear Kotex. Either side gives you protection and security—greater than any you've had with other products.

De Luxe (Mauve), pins or fasteners, 3/6
Featherweight (Blue), with fasteners, 1/9
Wonderform (Pink), pins or fasteners, 3/2

If your make-up melts you should try ...

- ☐ A cold splash? ☐ The scrubbed and shiny look?
☐ Patchwork?

How to save face on humid evenings? First, before the shindig, use an astringent lotion (fresh from the ice box)—for a drying effect. Next, apply sponge cake make-up base, sparingly, and splash on cold water to "set it". Blot, then pat on the powder. You can save yourself many an anxious moment, too, when you choose Kotex. It's the napkin that tapers to a flat-pressed end—no sudden ridges or bulges to show through clingiest frocks or tightest jeans.

What is this ... ☐ A reminder? ☐ A good idea? ☐ A Kotex belt dispenser?



Right on all three counts. You'll find this pretty belt dispenser right on the counter wherever you buy Kotex. It reminds you that you need a Kotex belt to give you complete Kotex comfort, and it's a timely reminder. (Haven't you been putting off buying a new belt, just because it slipped your mind?)

This month you don't even have to ask. Take out the belt you prefer and hand it across to the assistant. Buy two, and keep one, at work—just in case. There are three kinds to choose from.

What's best for keeping metal earrings bright?

- ☐ Colourless nail polish? ☐ Ammonia and water?
☐ Elbow grease?

Those new bracelet earrings—or any favourite pieces of costume jewellery will shine indefinitely if you treat them to a thin coating of colourless nail polish. It's a safeguard against tarnish. Just as those feather-soft Kotex edges are a safeguard against chafes at times when you really need comfort. That wider Kotex napkin really stays soft, can't pack hard or go stringy.

2/11 everywhere

More women throughout the world choose Kotex than all other sanitary napkins.

Beauty Expert's
advice on an

INTIMATE PROBLEM

It amazes me that some women are still distressed by the problem of superfluous hair. There's no need to worry these days, now you can literally cream away the hair—and quickly, too. I know there's a great temptation to use a razor, but do remember that razors make hair grow faster and coarser. They scrape tender skin and you're left with noticeable stubble. But the amazing cream called Veet removes all hair in three minutes, leaving skin silken-smooth! Summer and winter, legs must be Veet-smooth. Bare, hairy legs look so ugly, and the glamorous effect of sheer stockings is ruined if hair shows through. So get Veet, at all chemists and stores.



Cream away
unwanted hair in
summer.



Show girls
cream away
unwanted hair.

Large Economy
(double size), 4/11
Medium Size, 3/-

Attractive Alphas in
some country districts.

FISHER'S PHOSPHERINE

THE GREAT NERVE TONIC

A LADY AT RINGWOOD,
VIC., WRITES:

"My husband and I felt like
new beings after taking
Fisher's Phospherine. We
were run down and nervous.
Now life's worth living
again."

TAKE 4 DROPS IN A TUMBLER
OF WARM OR COLD WATER
EVERY MORNING.

IN ALL STATES EXCEPT N.S.W.
SOLD AS

FISHAPHOS



Make Baby's Hair
CROW CURLY
4 Weeks' Treatment
3/11 EVERYWHERE

Curlypet

SKIN ITCH Stops in 7 MINUTES

Don't let ugly, disgusting Pimples,
Eczema, Acne, Ringworm, Psoriasis,
Bacne or itching, Cracking, Peeling,
Burning Skin Troubles make life
unbearable and spoil your fun. Don't
be embarrassed and feel inferior be-
cause of bad skin. Now every coun-
try has a new American Hospital
Discovery called Nixaderm that stops
the itch in 7 minutes, kills germs and
tends, and in 24 hours begins to
clear the skin, clear, soft, and smooth.
No matter how long you have suf-
fered, get Nixaderm from your chem-
ist today under positive guarantee to
clear your skin or money back.

Prevent Sunburn
tan faster
with
SKOL

Pretty beach hat



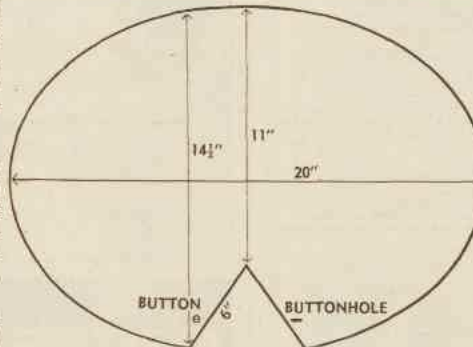
WHITE POPLIN lined
with geranium-red were
the colors chosen for
this hat, but any fast-
washing, spotted, or
floral cotton may be
used. Directions below.

● This wide-brimmed
hat is just the thing
for hot summer days.
Make it to go with
your swimsuit or
beach outfit.

MATERIALS: 1/2 yd.
36in. wide cotton
material, 1/2 yd. contrasting
colored material for under-
lining, 1/2 yd. leno for inter-
lining, 1 large button,
2 yds. bias binding.

Cut a paper pattern accord-
ing to measurements given in
the diagram at right. Open
out both cotton and underlin-
ing material and place pattern
on the two pieces with leno
interlining between. Baste the
three together to shape of pat-
tern. Baste from outside to
centre so as to keep material
firm for machining, but do not
cut material round the edge
until machining has been com-
pleted.

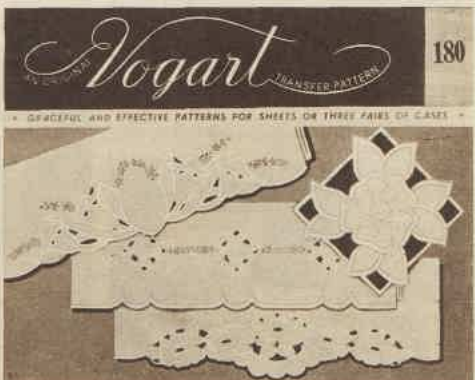
Machine three rows of
stitching closely and evenly
round edge of hat, then



PATTERN diagram shows the shape of the hat when laid
out flat. The gusset-shaped slit laps over and does up with
a button and buttonhole to round and shape the brim.

machine two more similar rows
towards the centre. Cut away
material at edge and bind with
bias binding.

Make a buttonhole (see dia-
gram) and attach a button to
the opposite side. Sew two tie-
strings on the underside of hat
so that they fasten comfortably
under the chin.



AMERICAN VOGART TRANSFER patterns are designed for
practically every type of embroidery. Each transfer sheet,
which measures 24in. x 28in., costs only 2/- . Shown above
is transfer pattern No. 180, which features graceful patterns
of tulips, roses, and daisies for easy-to-do cut-work. The
transfer can be had from our Needlework Department. For
address, see page 63.

Maternity belt

by SISTER MARY JACOB,
Our Mothercraft Nurse

If special pre-natal exer-
cises are done regularly
and the abdominal muscles
are in good condition, no
support should be needed
during the greater part of
pregnancy, especially a
first pregnancy.

During the last weeks of
pregnancy, pressure at the
base of the abdomen may
cause discomfort.

A simple, home-made belt,
with wide shoulder straps that
carry weight from the shoul-
ders and so relieve this pres-
sure, can be a great comfort
during this latter part of the
pre-natal period.

Printed instructions for
making the belt with informa-
tion for adjusting it and an
accompanying diagram can be
obtained from The Australian
Women's Weekly Mothercraft
Service Bureau, Box 4088,
G.P.O., Sydney.

Note: A stamped, addressed
envelope should be enclosed.

Save time and money with
**TODAY'S BIGGEST
BREAKFAST
BARGAIN**

Lively
flavour!

Open your packet and thrill to
the aroma of these big, golden
flakes! They make you feel hungry
just to look at them! Heat them
taste on to your plate. So they
should! They've been roasted,
toasted and crisped to do just that!
Pick up your spoon and crunch
into the biggest, crispest, most
luscious corn flakes ever made.
Kellogg's Corn Flakes.



Deep-down
Goodness!

Nutrition Experts say that one plate
of Kellogg's Corn Flakes with milk
and sugar plus fresh fruit and bread
and butter (or toast) gives you one-third
of your daily food needs. Here's a
complete, satisfying breakfast in itself!



24 big breakfasts
in every large packet!

Think of the money you save!
Compare the cost of one serving
of Kellogg's Corn Flakes with
that of meat, eggs, fish, bacon
these days! Only 10 seconds to
serve—in greasy griddles or pans.

Kellogg's CORN FLAKES

No Teething
Troubles here

When teething troubles start,
swiftly soothe baby's discom-
fort, reduce high tempera-
tures and induce normal rest-
ful sleep by giving Ashton &
Parsons' Infants' Powders.
They are absolutely safe, for
they will never conceal any
serious symptoms which may
develop.



Insist on being supplied with
**Ashton & Parsons
Infants' Powders**

They contain no Calomel or other Mercury Compounds.

Jaded nerves respond to

WINCARNIS

"The Wine of Life"

Ask for WINCARNIS from chemists

BOTTLED GOODNESS

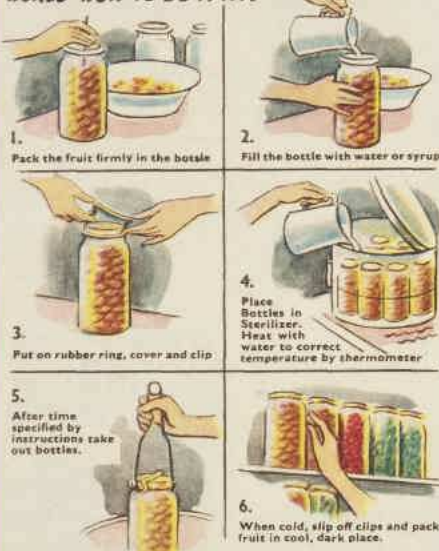
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FOWLERS VACOLA

HOME BOTTLING OUTFITS



HERE'S HOW TO DO IT...



FOWLERS VACOLA

No. 2 size outfit for use on every stove

The ideal way to provide tempting dishes the year round. Precious vitamins and minerals preserved to guard your family's health. Fruits, meats and vegetables are easy to preserve. No. 2 outfit illustrated is recommended for general use. Also available, an electric outfit and any number of spare bottles in all sizes.

OBTAINABLE AT ALL LEADING STORES THROUGHOUT AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND.



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Please forward me by return mail full details of your latest bottling outfits and my nearest dealer.

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Mandrake the Magician

MANDRAKE: Master magician, and
LOTHAR: His giant Nubian servant, with
PRINCESS NARDA: Set out on a dangerous expedition to South America to find the white queen of Taboo Land. They reach the end of the first lap of their journey and make camp. Narda decides to go for a swim and dives into a river full of piranha, tiny man-eating fish with needlesharp teeth. Mandrake pulls her to safety in the nick of time.
NOW READ ON:





Fashion FROCKS

Ready to wear, or cut out ready to make.

"DAPHNE."—A pretty blouse featuring a tucked yoke and Peter Pan collar. The material is rayon crepe-de-chine; the color choice includes white, pastel blue and pastel pink. Ready To Wear: Sizes 32in. and

34in. bust, 38/9; 36in. and 38 in. bust, 39/11. Postage and registration, 1/9 extra. Cut Out Only: Sizes 32in. and 34in. bust, 27/3; 36in. and 38 in. bust, 28/9. Postage and registration, 1/9 extra.



'Daphne'

"ABIGAIL."—A pretty one-piece dress with a keyhole neckline and front-buttoned fastenings. The material is printed Everglaze, featuring a white flower design printed on navy-blue, sage-blue, green, rose, and maize backgrounds.

Ready To Wear: Sizes 32in. and 34in. bust, 77/9; 36in. and 38in. bust, 79/11. Postage and registration, 2/9 extra.

Cut Out Only: Sizes 32in. and 34in. bust, 53/6; 36in. and 38in. bust, 55/9. Postage and registration, 2/9 extra.

NOTE: Please make a second color choice. No C.O.D. orders accepted. If ordering by mail, send to address given on page 53. Fashion Frocks may be inspected or obtained at Fashion Patterns, 445 Harris St., Ultimo, Sydney.



'Abigail'

A godsend to us...

bedridden nearly a year, now up and about again with new energy



If you are suffering, this letter will interest you

She writes:

"Recommended by our chemist to take Dr. Mackenzie's Menthoids for Rheumatism, I must write and tell you what a godsend they have been to us. My shoulder and knees and feet are now free from pain, the first time for years.

"My sister suffered terribly from swollen joints and was in bed for nearly a year. I sent her a flask of Menthoids and she felt so well after the first bottle that she continued taking them and, I am thankful to say, she is now up and about and does her own washing and housework again.

"My husband used to suffer a lot with Lumbago and swollen knuckles, but since he took Menthoids it has gone and he has never been troubled with it since. I tell everyone I know about Menthoids."

Yours sincerely,

(Mrs.) Ruby L.

Dr. Mackenzie's Menthoids will help you, too!

Dr. Mackenzie's Menthoids help drive out the everyday poisons and germs from your system that so often cause Headaches, Dizziness, Rheumatic Aches and Pains, Kidney and Bladder Troubles, Backache, Sciatica, Lumbago and similar ailments. If you suffer in this way, get a flask of Dr. Mackenzie's Menthoids to-day.

How Dr. Mackenzie's Menthoid treatment acts



More than 400 muscles support spine here. All are susceptible to injury and poisonous accumulations.

In order that Dr. Mackenzie's Menthoids may exert their beneficial action on Kidneys, Bladder and Bloodstream, the prescription includes medicaments that maintain their effective properties after passing through the digestive tract. Get a flask of Dr. Mackenzie's Menthoids to-day and rid yourself of that unhappy, depressed feeling—those aches and pains that are sapping your strength—and give yourself a new lease of life and youthful energy.

Start a course of Dr. Mackenzie's Menthoids to-day.

Get a month's treatment flask of Dr. Mackenzie's Menthoids for 7/6, with Diet Chart, or a 12-day flask for 4/- from your nearest chemist or store. If far from town, pin a postal note to a piece of paper with your name and address and send to British Medical Laboratories, Box 4155, G.P.O., Sydney.

Dr. Mackenzie's Menthoids—famous treatment for the blood



Get quick relief from backache rheumatism sciatica lumbago headaches dizziness

Free Diet Chart
Send a stamped addressed envelope to British Medical Laboratories Pty. Limited, Box 4155, G.P.O., Sydney, for your FREE copy of the Menthoids Diet Chart.

*Munch them with
cheese,
Crunch them with
ham,
Spread them with
honey,
Or serve them with
jam.*



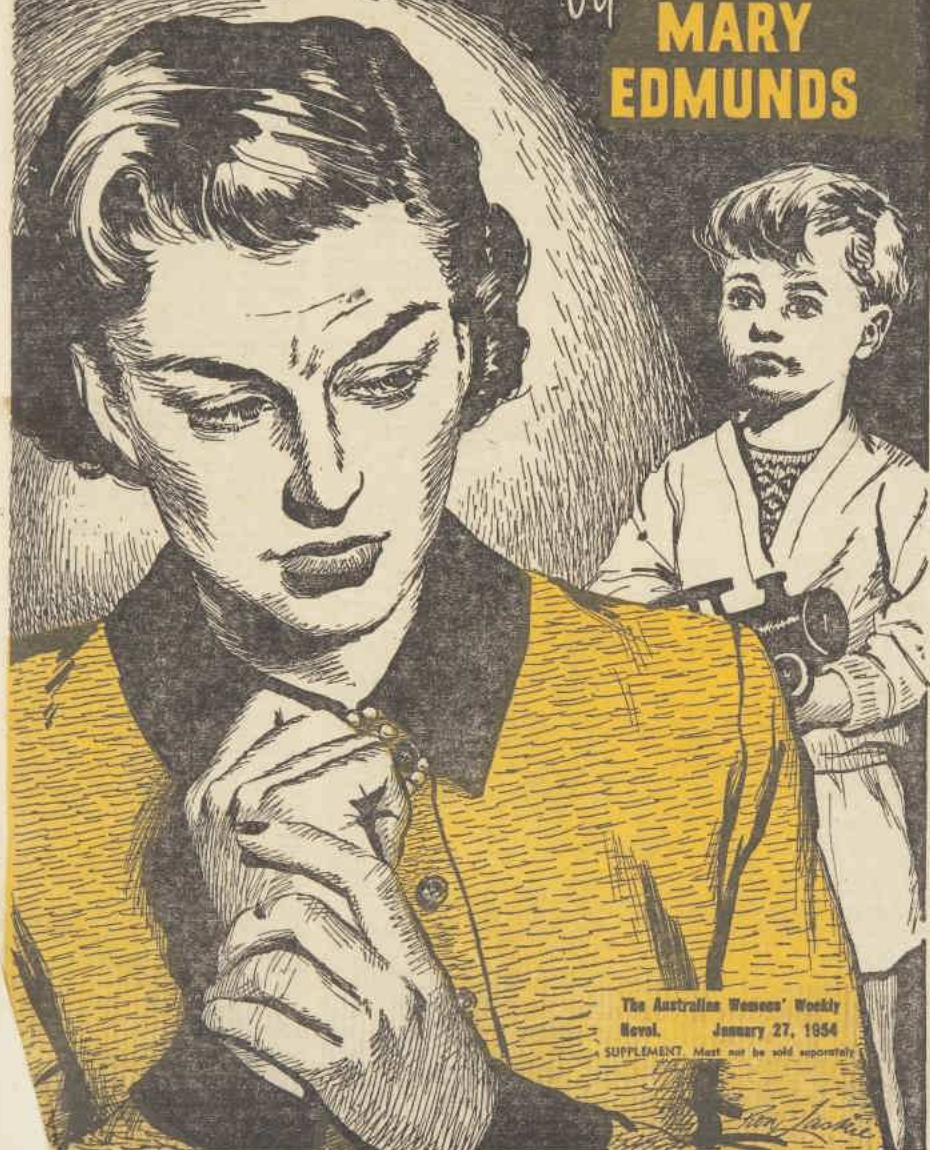
*Often buttered
never bettered.*

Only
Arnott's make
Sao Biscuits

There is no Substitute for Quality

Home Tomorrow

by **SELINA
MARY
EDMUNDS**



The Australian Women's Weekly
Novel. January 27, 1954

SUPPLEMENT. Must not be sold separately.

HOME TOMORROW

IT was barely six when Cella woke. She swam up from the depths of sleep and lay in warm stillness listening to the early morning birds. From where she lay, as she turned her head upon the pillow, Cella could see the elm tree that stood at the gate of the farm across the road. The tree spread itself generously against an unstained sky, pale and promising, and she remembered with a faint hint of panic the day's commitments.

There was to be a meeting with old friends, perhaps old enemies. Cella wondered why she had accepted the invitation. But the day, she told herself, would soon be past, and tomorrow offered a very different reunion. She could not check her smile as she thought of it.

And then, behind the happiness that came with the thought of tomorrow, there rose that little checking coldness. She turned it out impatiently. Limitations had to be accepted, however the pattern of life was set, and she had long accepted hers.

What she was given she took with open hands and a full heart, and what she might not have she would not any more regret. That the small chill could still rise in a corner of her mind she most bitterly resented.

She rose quickly, the sharp movement of throwing back the bedclothes a defence against recollection. And at once the ordinary and the commonplace took possession. Six o'clock—the train to catch at nine—the various small jobs to be concluded first. She went to the window and stood there a moment with her hand on the sill, looking across the garden to the village street.

When Cella went downstairs, whistling, the two cats came in at once from the garden, where they had been washing in the sun. She liked to think that they had come to greet her, but as soon as she opened the farther door they began to purr and growl, looking with languorous eyes not at her face but at the whiteness of the milk bottle.

"False and faithless," she called them, pouring the milk, setting down the saucers.

She left the kettle to boil and went out into the garden. In the shed the six pups broke into clamor the moment her foot scraped on the path. She looked at them over the half-door. They struggled and scrambled in the straw, shrieking their heads off, then flung themselves on their mother as though they had only just noticed her presence. Bella lay mildly panting, tolerant of the creatures, but no more.

As soon as Cella put her hand on the latch Bella rose and shook off the puppies, and came stretching and bowing to the door. Cella let her out, thrusting back the pups with difficulty.

Cella and Bella walked side by side to the cottage. "Tomorrow," Cella said, stooping to fondle the bitch. "Home tomorrow." The words rang in her mind. Tomorrow... home tomorrow...

She took her breakfast tray into the garden. Now the sun was strengthening fast. The day would be hot. It was tiresome that her arrangements would keep her away from home for the better part of two days. For a moment she contemplated skipping today's visit to Rougemont.

If she caught the 8.43 tomorrow

morning she would still be in time for the only appointment which held any interest for her. The whole of today could then be spent in the house and garden, she would be able to finish off a dozen jobs. But though the thought of Rougemont moved her to dread and alarm, it also beckoned her. She wanted to see the place again, she wanted to look at it with the eyes of experience and detachment.

As the day increased, the larks took a wider air; they hung over the garden, the downs, their airier home, now left behind. The garden unbuttoned itself, and what had been a picture of lawn and blossom painted in slightly blurred colors now came to sharper life.

When she first came to this place Cella had supposed she would never grow accustomed to kneading her pastry and basting her joint to the sound of the lark's song just beyond her open kitchen door. She had, indeed, grown accustomed, but the charm would never stale.

SITTING there on the doorstep with a tray balanced on her knees, Cella put her hand down on the spinnaker's head and felt the soft fur warm with the sun. The bitch sat leaning against Cella's side, her energy spent, her eyes half closed, motherhood sitting heavily upon her, dulling her figure. She knew her looks were gone, and sometimes Cella would catch a sullen sideways look, for she resented what her litter had done to her and longed now for nothing but to be rid of them.

Ah, Cella had sometimes said to her, if only all women could take their motherhood as lightly the world might be an easier place.

The village was fully awake by seven, the first tractor had rumbled past and the men had gone by to Buttonshaw's and Wickenden's, and to Chitty's small-holding. Thomsett's fruit farm. The paper was stuck in the front-door knocker, and the sharp smart sound of the little red post van drawing up at the gate roused Cella and sent her to the door.

"A lovely morning," she said to Tom Ede, the postman.

"That it is. A rare old morning, miss, and no mistake. I said to my old lady last night—fine tomorrow, I said. Rare sunset, wasn't it?"

"Beautiful. And I must go to London."

The man laughed cheerfully. "Today, is it? Thought it were tomorrow."

"I've got to be in London today, too."

"Ah well, another day and the place'll seem more like itself, eh?"

Cella smiled back at him.

"Well, good morning to you, miss—and happy days!"

He turned off down the path with a brisk walk that lifted his shoulders, the packet of mail held in his hand like a fan, and Cella stood in the doorway looking after him. Then she moved impatiently and went back into the house. She hurried about her work singing like a girl. When she heard herself singing she stopped self-consciously and glanced in a mirror. She always forgot, away from her reflection, that there was a good beginning of grey hair to be reckoned with.

Mrs. Tuppen came at eight, moving slowly because of the growing heat down the stretch of street between her cottage and Cella's. She seemed vexed to find that breakfast was over.

"I was set on bringing it to you in bed, Miss Scarie. There's a long day ahead of you. You should save yourself. You don't want to be worn out before tomorrow. Whatever for did you want to be up so early?"

"Too good a morning to stay in bed."

"You'll rue it," Mrs. Tuppen said.

"Perhaps I won't go today... all those women I haven't seen for years... it's a bit harassing. And I don't know how I've worn myself!"

The woman looked at her indulgently. "Mrs. Lusted was saying only yesterday, miss, 'It's high time Miss Scarie found herself a nice gentleman,' she said."

Cella laughed. "The time's so high it's soared right out of sight!" She was half ashamed of the warm, almost tender glow she felt. It was a littleness of spirit, she supposed, that found pleasure in being discussed by two village women across the post-office counter. She ought rather to be irritated. But it was because she knew that they had spoken kindly, because they had accepted her now.

Here, where only a few years ago she had been a stranger, she had found all that was best of friendship and sympathy. This, now, was home—not the old house in Oxford where she had spent her childhood, nor Rougemont where she had worked and lived for fifteen long years; nor yet that warmer, stranger place, so briefly known, towards which her heart and mind strained even now against her bitter determination.

"Now then," Mrs. Tuppen said, "you know very well Miss Smethwick never took her first till she was past fifty."

"And you still call her Miss Smethwick. Still—fifty. You can give me a few more years of freedom, then, can't you?"

The woman gave her a look that was half indulgent, half gently inquisitive.

"People'd like the best for you," she said, in her soft voice. "There's a great many good friends of yours here in West Winchell."

"Thank you, Mrs. Tuppen. Perhaps I have the best already."

She laughed again and went from the kitchen. Upstairs in her room she stood before the open wardrobe and wondered how best to impress at Rougemont. It was years since she had seen the place. What were they all like now?

She thought of herself as she had been that first term at Rougemont. Twenty-three years old, with one miserable year's governessing behind her, uncertain, plain. And frightened to the death of Mary Davenport, who by the strangest metamorphosis had become, instead of a friend, the fountain of all authority, headmistress, nemesis, divinity itself. It had been good of Mary to take her on the staff at all; better still with such patient care to turn the unpromising newcomer into a competent teacher of English history.

And the time must not be forgotten when the friend emerged again from the stern figure of the headmistress, and held disaster at bay. Poor dear Mary... in the final reckoning, which of them was the better off?

As she got out the car and drove to the station, Celia's mind was full of Rougemont. The memory of Mary Davenport's frighteningly gentle authority, the slight twist of cruelty that was never recognised, came so clearly to her now that again she contemplated changing her plans.

When she reached London she would not change trains but go instead into the town and do her shopping, walk in St. James' Park, sit soaked at some concert or in the stalls of a theatre. Shakespeare in the Park perhaps would best suit her mood on this fine, sunny day at the end of the summer term.

None the less, when she reached Victoria she took a taxi to Waterloo and caught the train that would take her into Surrey.

The moment she stepped out on to the platform Celia was back in the past. So little about the place was changed that for a second she thought she had never escaped. She stood there hesitant, absorbed, uncertain whether to take a bus or to walk or to call a taxi. She decided to walk. As she made up her mind she saw Madame Audemars come out of the station and hold up a hand imperiously towards the taxi.

Celia swung away. She was not yet ready for this encounter. She walked swiftly from the station and when she reached the street she found that her heart was hammering and her knees uncertain.

As she went by the row of shops she glanced uneasily at her own reflection, distorted in the windows, wondering if she had put on the right dress, wondering how much she had changed—and bitterly ashamed that a glance at an old enemy could so undermine her confidence. She braced herself and lifted her head. She was at once repelled and excited at the thought of meeting the Frenchwoman.

Turning the corner out of the High Street, climbing the hill, Celia saw Rougemont planted at the summit. The trees that surrounded the building were indeed higher, fuller. Beyond their bulging greenery reared the surplish-red brick of the house. A few more steps and the gateway came into view, the high posts crowned with lamps.

On one post was the modest brass plate which alone suggested that the house was institutional. Celia gave a quick nervous grin; she wondered if Mary Davenport's school was still a "boarding-school for the Daughters of Gentlemen." As she came slowly up the long hill, walking on the shady side, two taxis swooped out of the drive and a private car overtook her and entered.

The suggestion of persons gathering for a planned occasion increased Celia's nervous tension. There was still time for her to turn round and go back to the station. But she was forced on by her half-morbid curiosity. When she reached the gateway at last she did not hesitate.

It was all incredibly familiar. She might have left here only yesterday, she might be returning now to take up the old round. The long drive led in a curve which concealed the house from the road, and then swept suddenly into an immense circle before the front door with its flight of wide, shallow steps—these steps were the only beauty in the place. In the centre of the gravel circle there was of course a round bed filled with standard roses.

Reaching the house, mounting those impressive stone steps, Celia found herself at last entirely calm. She counted the steps from long habit—eighteen, nineteen, twenty, twenty-one. Then she went in through the open front door and found them all gathered in the hall, a crowd of twenty or more

women revolving rather noisily round an acknowledged centre.

Mrs. Davenport was both tall and broad. She had startling black hair that surely must be dyed, for she was now nearing sixty. Her black eyebrows, heavy but well-shaped, rose with an air of mild astonishment above her fine dark eyes; in fact mildness was the least of her qualities.

Immediately Celia appeared in the doorway, Mary Davenport looked up. She moved forward instantly, the woman falling back humbly from her path. Both hands outstretched, she called to welcome the newcomer.

For the first time in her life, Celia made no movement towards the Headmistress. She stood where she was in the doorway, smiling, expectantly poised. Only when Mary was within reach did Celia hold out her hand.

She had not expected, in this setting, to find herself so warmly embraced.

"My dear Celia! After so long! You've neglected me disgracefully. You see—I have had to ask all those people here in order to force your hand."

"Don't let everyone else hear you say so—or have you told them all the same story?"

"That's no greeting, my dear, for an old friend. And one so delighted to see you."

Celia laughed. "Forgive me, I'm never quite sure, you know, whether you're Mrs. Davenport or Mary."

"Do you have to ask me that? A friend, my dear, an old friend—by either name. Why is it so long since you asked me to visit you?"

She took Celia's hand and drew it through her own arm, urging her towards the group abandoned in the hall.

"My dears, here is Celia Scarfe. Such an old friend . . . such a dear friend . . . Celia, do you know them all?"

They had already turned towards her. A sea of faces, interested, hostile, indifferent, mocking. For a moment her nerve wavered again. Then gradually the pieces shifted into a picture that she knew.

"Madame Audemars . . . Miss Strutt and Miss Clancy . . . And Miss Evans, too . . . Oh, how strange it seems after all this time! I haven't set eyes on any of you since I left."

ALREADY the next corner was at the door. As the Headmistress sailed forward to meet her, Celia lost her exalted status and became one of the crowd. Unsupported, she must now make her own way among them. They shifted around her, she became the centre of this smaller circle.

"Well, ma chère Celia," Madame Audemars said at her elbow, "you have grown very chic. Ah, you look quite prosperous—does she not, Miss Strutt? We are all quite in the shade, eh?"

"I believe she's got married," said Beryl Strutt, laughing with all her teeth. "Is that the secret, old girl? Never breathed a word of it—but I bet she's got married!"

"No," Celia said easily. "Quite on the shelf, I assure you. And you?"

"Oh yes, rather," said Miss Strutt, scarlet. "On the shelf and getting a bit dusty." But although she made a joke of it, it was plain she was not really amused.

"Nothing dusty about our Miss Scarfe," she went on. "Rather not, Scarfe. No—you haven't really changed a scrap, old girl."

"Nor you," Celia remarked, not altogether kindly. It was a shock to hear this woman of her own age still using the old petola. She glanced at Mirette Audemars, and admired for the thousandth time that neatly sophisticated smile.

"I'm still on the staff, y'know," Beryl Strutt told her. "Get a bit stiff in the lumbar regions after a go of gym—but I manage."

"Chacun a son gout," Mirette Audemars said, half under her breath. "For my part I am a long time retired. I have a pleasant house in Passy. The top flat is for myself and the rest are very well let—very well indeed. I have a most excellent view over Paris. I may tell you."

Somebody called her then, and she moved away still employing the enigmatic smile. She was twice as fleshy as she had been in her days at Rougemont, though it was a hard, well-corseted fleshiness. Her moustache was a healthier growth, and she too appeared to have dyed her hair.

"She was in the Resistance—did you know?" Beryl Strutt breathed in Celia's ear.

"Probably the first time she ever resisted anything—or anyone," Celia replied unkindly. "Poor Mirette!"

"You never liked her, Scarfe."

"Did you?"

"You can't help admiring anyone who was in the Resistance."

"Admire, yes. That's different."

"The H.M. was pretty set up when she heard about it—that was after the liberation, of course. Well—you can guess."

"I can indeed. The tale, no doubt, was told after morning prayers. And then there was a special prayer offered up for the brave ex-member of the Rougemont teaching staff. Well, Beryl, don't look so pained. I've grown up, if you haven't."

"You've grown cynical, if you ask me, old thing. You shouldn't have given up working. That's the thing to keep you young."

"Do I look such a hag?"

"No—you look very smart and all that."

"Are you happy here, Beryl?"

"Of course I'm happy. It's very comfortable here. I've got my own room with all my own things. I admire the H.M. very greatly. It's a fine thing to have such an example before you all the time."

"Yes," Celia said, "of course." She was chilled by the picture Beryl Strutt so blithely presented. She wanted to ask her where she spent her holidays, what she would do when she retired. "You must come and spend a week-end with me some time," she said instead, curbing her own softness. "I live in the country now. I've a very pleasant cottage and it's a nice village. West Winstead, in Sussex. It's near Climping Cross."

"Oh, thanks," said Miss Strutt. She looked quickly, almost furtively into Celia's face. "Do you live alone, or what?"

"Part of the time."

"I see." But she didn't and it was unlikely she would come, Celia realised with relief, unless out of curiosity.

"What do you do with yourself all the time, Scarfe?"

"I do a bit of lecturing round and about the county. I enjoy that . . . You must write and tell me when you'd like to come down. Perhaps during these holidays?"

"Well, no, thanks very much. I'm full up these holidays. I'm going to Harrogate with my cousin."

Miss Evans came up to them. She had been mathematics mistress in Celia's day. She was younger than Celia and had gone on from Rougemont to a far better job. She was bright and hard.

"What are you doing with yourself these days, Celia Scarfe?" She turned Celia's left hand over rudely. "No ring, I see. I made sure you'd marry. Didn't get out of teaching soon enough, I suppose."

"Perhaps not," Celia said, withdrawing her hand.

It was a relief when Mrs. Davenport came up behind them, took Celia's arm and drew her away. She must meet the new members of the staff.

As they crossed the floor arm-in-arm, Mary bent forward and peered into Celia's face.

"You're happy?"

"Yes, Mary."

"Everything has turned out well?" Without warning, Celia's eyes filled with tears.

"Of course, Mary."

"Forgive me, my dear, I didn't mean to distress you."

"You're not distressing me. I am happy. I am."

"There," Mary Davenport said, pressing her arm, "we won't speak of it now. This is Miss Shuttleworth, who has your job of teaching history."

Although she stood talking with apparent animation to Miss Shuttleworth, a woman of fifty or so with a dry, acceptable wit, Celia's mind was divided. The sudden weakness had caught her unawares and she was bitterly angry with herself. What sort of an impression had she left with Mary? And would she ever be able to correct it—could she correct it, for that matter?

She stood talking to her successor with conventional good manners, looking coolly about the place so long familiar, so long forgotten. The noise, the accumulation of voices made it necessary for her to shout at Miss Shuttleworth.

"Could we go outside?" she suggested at last. "I should like to see the grounds again."

As they left the room she was aware of Mirette Audemars considering glance, and she found herself praying that she and her old enemy would not be left alone. She was no better equipped today than she had ever been to cope with that faintly salacious imagination.

"I can't stand that woman," Miss Shuttleworth said, with healthy bad manners, as she and Celia reached the terrace. "The Frenchwoman, I mean. There's nothing more irritating than a heroine."

"How I wish I hadn't come," Celia exclaimed. "This kind of reunion is dreadfully deflating."

The older woman replied in a soothing tone, as though they were friends of long standing. "It will all be over in an hour or two. And I understand these gatherings only take place every three years. They please the Head, and she's a grand woman."

They walked together across the long, smooth lawns, recovered already from the neglect of war-time. Miss Shuttleworth talked and Celia listened or half-listened, and sometimes slipped in a word that seemed to be in the right place. Gradually she was soothed by the splendid afternoon, by the remaining charm of the place, by the comfortable knowledge that it was no longer her world.

Here, in a different life, she had watched the years going over and seemed powerless to assuage their steady flight by adorning them with her own achievement. She had not disliked her work; she had been grateful to Mary; she had found friends congenial enough, she had been fond of the girls she taught. One or two remained in her memory for their accomplishments or their charm, or their blundering inability to do any better than she herself was able. But always they had gone on and she was left behind. She was still there when they came with their husbands and children, a little condescending now in their own greater experience. If one in particular had never

returned to plague her with realisation of a fuller life, might she be here to this day like poor Beryl Strutt, still speaking an outmoded language and hearing nothing incongruous in its hearty syllables? Might this still be her only home?

Celia smiled suddenly, and her mood changed. "Will you stay here?" she asked the schoolmistress. "Will you stay here long? Does it satisfy you?"

"I think so. These children, you know, can be an endless fascination. In the holidays I travel. It's not at all an uncomfortable life—not for a woman of my age. Do you travel, Miss Scarfe?"

"Not for some years."

"And now you live in the country, I believe."

"Yes, I have a small cottage. People say village life is narrow, but I find it satisfying. I like people. The older I get, the better I like them—I feel very warmly towards them. I like even dull people. I feel fond of them. Does that sound very stupid?"

"Not in the least. So long as you're not infected with the dullness yourself."

"I'm too busy. With the cottage and the garden, and some lecturing I do during term-time—not in the holidays. I seem to have my hands full enough. I don't think there's time to grow dull. Or perhaps that's complacent?"

"I think," said Miss Shuttleworth, "that you have reached some sort of philosophy, haven't you? I think you have compassion."

Celia laughed a little. "You're giving me a good character. Not everyone would do that. Not Madame Audemars, for instance."

When they had had tea, which was served on the terrace, Mrs. Davenport took Celia to one side and asked if she would stay on to dinner and accept a bed for the night. Celia had left her suitcase at Victoria Station, but it was not really this that made her hesitate. She was nervous of Mary's ability to upset her. Mary knew too much.

"Say yes, Celia. It is so long since we talked and you never write. There is a great deal I want to hear about you, my dear. Let me lend you a night-dress."

Perhaps it was the old custom of accepting Mary's authority. Celia stayed. Gradually the party thinned. The guests had trains to catch, the staff was in a hurry to begin the delayed holiday. Soon none was left but the matron and Beryl Strutt, who did not care to spend a night alone in London before travelling to meet her cousin in the Midlands. And, of course, there was Miss Clancy, Mary's secretary, who had been with her 20 years and still loved her above all else in the world.

Celia stood with Mary Davenport and said goodbye to them all. Now she was the privileged friend, grown out of servitude, enjoying an intimacy with the head which these others would probably never come to. She felt strong then, able to cope with Mary's well-meant inquiries which, as always, contained within themselves that unrecognised seed of cruelty.

But when she went upstairs to the room allotted her, conducted by matron but led by memory, Celia felt again the weight of past years lingering in these dark heavy rooms. She stayed for a time in the bedroom, combing her hair, arranging her face. But then, under a compulsion at once revolting and stimulating, she went along the broad landing, walking softly towards a familiar door. She put her hand on

the door-knob and then hesitated; but the driving power of her own nostalgic imagination was too strong. She opened the door.

The green baize inner door was already thrown back. She went into the room with a hesitant step, glancing over her shoulder as though she expected to find someone watching her stealthy entry. But there was an absolute silence. Emptied of its chattering crowds, the house seemed to settle in upon itself, to sigh and shrug and sink swiftly into the half-sleep of holiday time.

She stood in the middle of the room, looking cautiously round her. This was the staff common-room. Here she had sat to correct exercise books, to write letters, trying to shut out the sound of talk from others in the room. Here Mirette Audemars had liked to bring her sewing, sitting bolt upright on the window-seat and holding her work rather close to her face.

Here had come angry, depressed, excited young women from rows in class, from the hockey field, from the headmistress' study. Here it had all begun.

The door behind Celia opened suddenly and Madame Audemars came into the room.

"I thought I might find you here. I have missed my train and I am invited to remain for the night. What are you doing, Celia? Recalling the old days?"

Celia knew that the color had drained from her face. She felt the past rushing towards her, but although she seemed to put up both hands and thrust it away from her, it sailed forward still, borne as it were upon the tightly coiled bosom of the returned Frenchwoman as on a swelling sea.

As though she felt the devil at her heels, Celia bounded up the shallow stairs to the room on the first floor and went in, slamming the door behind her.

The room was quiet, the windows open to a side of the house removed from the familiar habitation, shadier today than ever shadier today of all days in the year. The room was well and discreetly chosen, well and discreetly furnished. Comfortable but neutral, lacking personality because it received the imprint of too many conflicting personalities. It was intended as a haven, but this it could never be since it must of its very nature be always shared.

It was spoilt for Celia now by the presence of Madame Audemars. She found time even today to sit upright on the window-seat, stabbing a needle with a long fine thread in and out of a neat square of linen. She was embroidering a monogram in the corner of a handkerchief already exquisitely hemstitched. She glanced up at Celia and grimaced. "It is nearly over," she said.

"Very nearly."

Celia replied shortly, irritated to think that her wide impatient gesture had been witnessed. She walked to the window and leaned out. This time tomorrow she would be away, she would have begun what she could only look forward to as an adventure. She felt a little like the heroine of a story whose first chapter concludes with the conventional words—Little did she know or—Had she but realised

Convention demanded something more of her than this leaning from an open window above ahaven lawns in a house that could never be called a home. Never, never. The thousand footfalls, increasing and conglomerating with the years, could never be denied a perpetual echo. The swinging and the flouncing and the pouncing, and the rather dreadful, hopelessly moving good fellowship would hang

about these walls and thicken on them like a growth of creeper. Time could only intensify.

"How do you find time to be sewing?" Celia asked her enemy.

"It is the last of six, you know — a present, for my sister. I must finish it today."

"Are you spending your holiday at home?"

"It is not altogether certain. The Frenchwoman contrived a provocative manner. Celia felt, as she was meant to feel, that mysterious and exciting circumstances governed the summer holiday plans of Mirette Audemars. Mirette! Celia looked with distaste at the smooth bent head, the dead white parting down the almost blue-black hair. Did she dye it? Madame Audemars glanced up and smiled faintly. And at once Celia was made aware of men, with the most capital of M's looming in and around the leisure hours of her colleague.

There was an impression of small tables in quietly lit restaurants, of the Bois at dusk, of the Champs Elysees with a moon shining above the lamps. . . . Since Mirette was no green girl but a sturdy widow of thirty-six with a tight, black-covered bust, Celia imagined the companions of her problematic adventures as men with up-curved moustaches and gold-rimmed pince-nez on black silk ribbon. She felt an hysterical desire to giggle, but remembered in time that she too was past green girlhood.

"And you, my dear Celia, I do not have to ask about your plans. We all know. Italy! It is so darling."

"I dare say I shall enjoy it," she said.

"Of course you will. You will make new friends, forget you are a school-marm. It will be a most excellent thing for you. We must all forget these surroundings in the holidays or assuredly we perish." She laughed assuredly we perish. "But you must be less solemn, ma belle, there is no doubt of that. Every-one will know you are an English-woman — and they will take warning."

"I'll manage, I dare say."

"And if war should break out — what then? They will inter-r-r-n you!"

"It won't." She meant it can't, it mustn't — not just at this moment.

She turned her back and sat down at a desk.

She sighed sharply, pulled a sheet of writing-paper towards her, and made some show of dashing off a letter to nobody at all. She should have been downstairs with others of the staff, supervising the departures. But high summer over these lawns and terraces induced a strange melancholy, a solitariness of the spirit.

When the yellow sun and distorted shadows lay upon the grass in the long evenings, when voices called from the tennis courts as the balls sang on fast rackets, then loneliness knew its most positive form.

"When I was a child," Mirette Audemars was saying, "I went in summer with my mother and sisters to stay with grand-mère by the sea. It was in Normandy."

"I did the same," said Celia. "But it was by no means in Normandy." In spite of herself she laughed to remember the prim house set high above the little town.

"Ah, they were beautiful," Mirette said, "those days of innocence!"

"Were they?"

"Not to you, Celia?"

"Sometimes, I suppose."

Summer had seemed endless when Celia and Elaine and their mother went to stay with grand-mère by the sea. Summer was the sound of spoons tinkling in saucers for tea in the garden, the wind that flicked the corners of the lace-trimmed cloth, the

voice of the grandmother and of her daughters. Mother and Auntie Fran. In summer the two little girls found their mother quite changed. She sat languidly in a shaded deck-chair, her hands idle.

The days were long, slow, uncounted. Within the house, as in the garden, was the smell of the sea, and sand was ground shining into the carpets where the children had run in and out in their beach shoes.

That household was a subdued household. Elaine, a high-spirited child, was forever being checked. Celia was more cautious. She was also more impressionable. She was infinitely depressed by the way their grandmother always spoke of "your poor mother." As though she were ill; as though, indeed, she were already dead.

When they sat at tea in the garden Elaine and Celia had a little cloth of their own spread under the cherry tree, spread there for them by Auntie Fran. They pretended it was a picnic, but the china cups were too frail, the food too delicately prepared.

"Let you poor mother have a moment's peace," Granny would say when the children danced impatiently, begging to be taken on some trip.

Their poor mother smiled faintly over their heads. She conditioned herself easily to an atmosphere that soothed her. She sighed a lot. She sat idle for hours at a time.

Wet days at home were better, really, than sunny days by the sea. At home were all their own dear shabby possessions — paint boxes for rainy afternoons when there could be no walk, the broken ludo board hinged with adhesive tape — the old toys, the old places, the old sounds and smells and ceremonies.

And after a week or two, back in the university town where they had their home, their poor mother gradually became herself again . . .

MISS CLANCY put her head round the door.

"Miss Scarfe? Ah — there you are! Mrs. Davenport would like a word with you."

"Now? This minute?"

"She's in her study. One of the old girls is asking for you."

"Who?" Celia asked. She felt her face warming, for she knew her own weakness, and that the others laughed at her for having favorites.

"It's Lorenza, dear," Miss Clancy said.

"Lorenza Mather," Celia corrected. "She's married, you know." She got to her feet. "All right — I'm coming."

"And here's Miss Scarfe," said the Headmistress, as Celia came into the study. Her manner had the inevitable tinge of condescension proper to the moment. "Miss Scarfe — Lorenza has been asking for you."

"How are you, Lorenza?" Celia said. The girl was standing in the window recess, where the glass doors opened on the little garden that was Mrs. Davenport's own. She did not move as Celia came into the room, but stood a moment poised and purposeful. She had entirely grown up and she wanted everyone to know it. Her left hand, with the wedding ring and slightly exaggerated engagement diamond, was laid ostentatiously on the back of a chair. Only this studied placing betrayed the fact that her marriage was a recent one.

"How nice to see you again, Miss Scarfe," said the grown-up Lorenza. "I've come to fetch Elizabeth. She's spending the first part of her holidays with us."

Celia smiled, welcoming the re-emergence of the schoolgirl.

"Miss Scarfe, look after Lorenza while I see the next parent, will you?" "Let's go into the garden," Lorenza said. And to show her complete emancipation she turned out through the garden door and went leisurely down Mrs. Davenport's own forbidden steps.

It was a very warm day with a high clear sky. Miss Scarfe and Lorenza walked slowly in the garden, they paced the lawns, talking, gradually a little easier with one another. Soon, Celia told herself, they would be quite at home. She deplored her own softness. She had been teaching for more than ten years and still she would not accept the necessity of loneliness or the dangers of affection. She was too tender with the inevitable schwarmerei and so was easily accused of deplorable favoritism.

Walking there with Lorenza she believed for a moment that opinion, that experience was proved false. It was possible, after all, to achieve a lasting friendship between mistress and pupil. As Lorenza began to chatter, Celia longed for Mirette Audemars to come out and see them. She of all the rest should be refuted, for it was over this business of affection and favoritism that she had become an enemy. Her eyes were too keen, their expression too sophisticated; she knew too much and was too eager to share her knowledge.

"And are you still living in London?" Celia asked Lorenza.

"Not since last autumn — Munich, I mean. I've got scared and bought a house in the country. Don't you think it's rather silly?"

"Is it? I really don't know."

"I'm convinced there's going to be a war."

"Oh, nonsense!" Celia said sharply. Then she withdrew slightly, taking refuge in flippancy. "Not until after my holiday, I hope."

"I'm going to have a baby in January," Lorenza said.

For a moment Celia could think of no reply. Blankness invaded her mind, she groped vainly for words.

It was then that she saw Lorenza looking at her with that expression which would never again be forgotten. The eyes were quite hard with scorn. The whole charming face with its full red mouth expressed a brief contemptuous pity. Looking then at her pupil, Celia knew herself outstripped in a different knowledge, an older experience, and she who had been the teacher was now the taught. She felt her flesh shrinking, her mind cringing, she knew an utter grovelling wretchedness. Nothing remained between her and Lorenza but the age-old enmity of the neglected for the chosen.

"But perhaps you don't care for babies," Lorenza said, in a smooth, amused voice . . .

By early evening the majority of the staff had left Rougemont. Mary Davenport invited Celia and Mirette Audemars to dine with her. Celia had hoped that she and Mary would be alone. They had been friends for years, since long before Celia came to teach at Rougemont. The presence of the Frenchwoman at the dinner table ruined everything. It was with a sensation of doom that Celia learnt that she and Mirette would be leaving in the morning by the same train. Unless she could throw her off in some way they would travel to France together.

"Lorenza has grown into a very pretty girl," the Headmistress remarked, over the tepid soup. "Fined down a little."

Mirette laughed, "But not for long. She is encephalic, I think."

"I really don't know," Mary Davenport said, perhaps a little coldly, as

though the choice of word made the whole thing needlessly indelicate.

The conversation was flat, the meal cold and familiar. Beetroot and mashed potatoes with cold meat. The meat was flawless, but the beetroot tasted earthy.

Mary looked suddenly with a warm fondness at Celia. "Next term you start your twelfth year at Rougemont," she said, unaware of the shiver of distance that convulsed the younger woman at her word.

"Twelve years!" Mirette Audemars rolled her eyes and spread her fingers. "It is a life-time. You must have been a child, a mere girl."

"I was twenty-three," the Frenchwoman ignored the warning in Celia's chilly tone. "Not much older than your little friend."

"What little friend?" Mary asked. "Lorenza," Celia said quickly, forestalling her enemy.

Mrs. Davenport raised her eyes slightly, the Headmistress taking over instantly.

"You've never grown out of that fault, my dear. You will ruin your teaching if you indulge this favoritism."

Surprised and hurt that Mary should be willing to discuss her failings in front of Mirette, Celia replied coldly. Recognising the danger note, Mary said lightly that perhaps Celia should never have taken up teaching.

"Not that I could do without you," she added hastily. "After all, I was the one who urged you on, wasn't I?"

"Yes," Celia said, briefly sighing. "You were the one."

"I always used to say to her, Madame. When I have a school of my own, Celia, you are the first member of the staff I shall engage."

"Then," remarked Mirette. "Celia came with me to look at the house, the very first time—remember, Celia?"

"I always felt the need to rescue Celia," Mrs. Davenport was telling Mirette Audemars.

The Frenchwoman gave her short, braving laugh. "Rescue!"

"Rescue me, Mary? From whom?" "From yourself—from your mother—from the memory of Elaine."

"You rescued me," Celia agreed. "From my mother."

When Celia first went to school—a day-school in a tidy street on the other side of the town—she became aware for the first time of her father's absence. She found herself, quite suddenly and unexpectedly, not so much bereft as distinguished by an incomplete home life. When she was asked by her new young friends about her father she was astonished to discover she knew nothing about him. So she blushed, and said that he was dead. As soon as she realised the situation she realised too that her sister, who was older and therefore must know more, was clearly indifferent.

"But what happened to him, Elaine?"

"He went."

"He died?"

"No. He just went. And he won't come back, ever," Elaine added, with conviction.

Elaine was three years older than Celia. At such a moment, over such a question, she seemed an age away. Her small face with its pointed chin and fly-away eyebrows held a strange maturity. Elaine was not best loved by her mother, but for her younger sister she was the essence, the epitome of perfection.

In spring and autumn when the young Celia walked in the streets of the old town she knew a strange exulting melancholy. A new light was in the streets and voices sounded strangely on an air unfamiliar and clear. It was

war-time, and coming and going among the grey colleges were fewer young men, many more girls.

Celia told herself that she, too, would go to the university, but not here—she would go away, away from home. She would find her learning in freedom. Her emotions were tangled inside her, like a skein of wool ball wound. Sometimes she was afraid to think and she was not helped by her own inability to make friends. The poignant and inevitable "Where am I going—what am I?" came to her early.

Elaine appeared to have none of these difficulties. She thrived and flourished and all her delight was clear to see in her piquant little face. Her fair hair never lost its lustre, her complexion remained delicate and clear. There was a transparency about her. One might have supposed her utterly and staunchly honest. But she had soon learnt to keep her interests apart from her home.

As a young child she was always going to tea in other people's houses and wisely refraining from bringing any of her young friends back to her own. By the time Celia was groping towards some form of self-expression, Elaine was already enthusiastically exploring the delights of youthful flirtation. Far unlike Celia she had never attended to the household legend that all men are monsters.

Mrs. Scarfe never spoke of her husband, except by implication. "That is a man all over," she would say, of some enormity. And—"Men are all alike." Or conversely and more subtly—"No woman would think of behaving so badly." And so on.

She was horribly mistaken. When Elaine was 17 she ran away to London, where she married a medical student, met at a dance she had attended one evening in spring, when she was supposed to be at a lecture.

"She always took after her father," Mrs. Scarfe said with bitterness. "She was a bad influence for Celia. It is as well she has decided to make her own life."

Was it possible that anybody living could speak so coldly of Elaine? Celia, utterly herself, stared out of the window where to realise that never again would she see her sister hurrying in at the gate, an expression of satisfied pride and independence on her face.

"But that your sister should run away from home!" Mirette exclaimed. "My sister, also, is married to a doctor. But at least that business was approved by the family."

"My sister's husband is Sir James Penhawe, one of the king's physicians," Celia said with some pleasure.

"Ah," Mary Davenport said, "that was the moment you, too, should have chosen for escape."

"Escape? At 14 years old? I had nowhere to escape. And certainly no money besides."

"Besides what?"

But she found it difficult to explain.

AS she stared from the window and knew that Elaine was gone and she was alone, she had heard her mother weeping. She could not bring herself to turn and see that adult face convulsed with grief and rage.

Embarrassment tied and confused her. She was a child and relied upon authority. Yet she knew she must turn and, in turning, put away childish things. She swung on her heel. Her heart was so big within her that she thought it must burst. She ran to her mother and flung her arms about her and the two of them wept together.

"Now we are alone," her mother said. "They have left us and we are alone!"

"But I love you," Celia heard herself say.

She hung back, as it were, from the words which severed her from Elaine. "My darling! My darling!" Mrs. Scarfe had cried.

Celia had waited for some revolution of feeling. But none came. She was unembarrassed, unencumbered. Her love was soft and throbbing in her throat. She told herself that she was glad Elaine had gone.

Later her mother sat down with her and began her confidences.

"I have never spoken about your father because it seemed best that he should be forgotten. But now I must tell you about him—we must have no secrets. I was so young when I married," she said, "an innocent child. Love must be very strong, my Celia. Perhaps mine was not strong enough." She shuddered very slightly, delicately. "Elaine must face the demands—"

She paused, looking at Celia the least bit questioning. "No—it is too wretched a story. We quarrelled continually. One cannot be a slave . . . When Elaine was four and you were not quite twelve months old, he left me for another woman. An actress."

Without emphasis, she printed the word upon the listening air in scarlet capitals.

Celia and her mother lived alone in the house that had known the vanished husband, a dead grandmother, the escaped Elaine. The place seemed to shrink to contain them, it was never too big. They filled it, mother and daughter, absorbed in one another.

"What a treasure you have in your Celia," her mother's friends used to say.

The mother would smile, accepting the praise. How pleasant it must have been for her to find, no longer school sister in close support of one another, but a confiding companion—a willing slave. One cannot be a slave . . . But she had forgotten. She had forgotten everything. Her lost husband became a dim shadow on a shapeless past, her lost daughter a rash promise never fulfilled. The past, however, though it was never now mentioned, served as a background to their present everyday existence.

It was a screen thrown round two paramount figures, herself and Celia. At first the screen was set square against the past and all its unwanted memories. But with time it began to unfold, and leaf by leaf it encroached, encircled, shutting the pair of them within an ever-diminishing space and growing at the same time higher, higher.

For a long while Celia was able to look out over the top of the screen. Then, though she grew taller, she was obliged to stand on tiptoe, to grasp the top of the screen and jump for a quick sight of the outer world. The day came when she could neither jump high enough, nor yet peer round the sides . . . nor could she push over the screen, which by now had acquired the depth and solidity of an old stone wall . . .

When they reached London Mirette Audemars announced that she would not leave England until the following day. This was a great relief to Celia. The Frenchwoman had talked incessantly in the train to Waterloo, and she pressed of this continuing all the way to the far side of the Channel was altogether too much for Celia. She had grown silent, her answers to Mirette's continual questions about her early friendship with Mrs. Davenport had had to be drafted from her. She hadn't wanted to admit that this reliable young woman several years her senior had been the one and only friend her mother ever smiled upon.

They parted at Waterloo, Madame

Antennas sailed away with one last enigmatic glance, and Celia was free to find a taxi and drive to Victoria.

In the station the travellers hurried and hesitated, divided sharply between the confident and striding, the anxious and inquiring. Celia had been abroad only once before, when she went with her mother to Switzerland and stayed for a month on the shores of Lake Thun. So now she found herself among the anxious and inquiring. She looked at the piled and expensive luggage of the confident travellers, the bulging rucksacks of others who seemed by their manner the flower of all voyagers. Her own two label-less suitcases quite depressed her. She was suddenly uncertain and a little miserable. She was going to Italy alone. It seemed a fruitless sort of enterprise.

Yet the feeling of release kept up her spirits. No more holidays at home. No more long summer days spent waiting on her mother, entertaining her, encouraging her. Celia's present state might be called loneliness, but it went better by the name of liberty. She tried to tell herself that the death of her mother had left her quite alone, and that this in itself was a sad and terrible thing for a woman in the middle thirties who had never come even remotely near marriage. But she could not deny the feeling of freedom, she could not for honesty's sake wear anything but a cheerful face.

As she walked across the station hall Celia admitted for the first time that she would leave Rougemont if she could. She had been there far too long, and unless she took the matter in hand she would stay there forever.

Suddenly she saw Elaine hurrying towards her.

Her sister was wearing a bright silk dress and a merry hat trimmed with flowers. She came forward with her clear smile and caught Celia by the arm.

"There—I knew it was today! You promised to let me know definitely, and I haven't had a word!"

"I'm so sorry—there was a rush at the end."

"James said I was mad to come, but I thought you ought to be seen off."

Celia kissed her. "Thank you, darling."

"I suppose it's all right—going, I mean? You don't think anything will happen?"

"No, I don't," Celia said shortly. "But I'm glad you're here. Just at the moment Italy seems a very long way away."

"I wish I were coming with you. Why didn't we try to arrange something?"

"It never occurred to me you'd be able to leave James. Oh, how maddening! We could have such times together."

"Next year, then, if everything's all right, you look different. Emancipated. Poor old thing . . . you need this."

Elaine had never gone home after her marriage, for she had never been forgiven. But she had been fortunate. Her husband had distinguished himself in his profession and had been rewarded; she lacked nothing but children. Living away from home, Elaine had made the acquaintance of their father and it was she who sent home the news of his death. Mrs. Scarfe had lived with her husband for five years. For another thirty she had never ceased to revile him. But the news of his death killed her. It was her last curious request that she should be buried with him.

"Now you're here I don't want to leave at all," Celia told her sister. "Why don't we see more of one another?"

"How can we, unless you leave that awful school and come to live in London? Why don't you? James will find

you somebody you can be secretary to. A really highly paid secretary."

"Not even James could make me a secretary, highly paid or otherwise. How to be, anyway?"

"Well, I was to tell you there's nothing to keep you away from us any more."

Celia pressed her sister's arm. These two had always been generous to her. James, in fact, had arranged and paid for their mother's expensive funeral.

"Come to us for Christmas, will you, Celia? I know it's terribly early to ask you. But say yes."

"Of course—it would be lovely. I shall be able to look forward to it all during the autumn term."

When they were standing outside her compartment, Celia suddenly found that the echoing station was home, and all that lay beyond it was not only strange but dangerous. And suppose there really was a war—what then? She glanced at the crowded train. All these holiday-makers—of course nothing would happen . . . But apart from that—if it was rough she would almost certainly be seasick.

"There's hardly any wind," Elaine said, smiling at the speculative traveller's look in Celia's eye. "You'll have a lovely crossing. Are you stopping in Paris tonight?"

"No, no," Celia said, rather quickly. "I've got a sleeper and I shall go straight through."

Her sister smiled at her. "And anyway what would you do in Paris on your own, you poor little school-marm?"

There was no malice in Elaine's voice, only tenderness, but all the same Celia found it hard to swallow her teasing. She was becoming dull and touchy, she told herself, thoroughly old-maidish. Soon she would have lost the last remnants of a sense of humor. She was glad that the whistle blew just then, relieving her of the necessity of a laughing reply. She stood at the window waving to Elaine, then she sat down in her corner seat and knew herself to be alone.

WHEN she went to Switzerland with her mother, Celia had been at a bitter disadvantage. She had just left the university and a governing job was already arranged for the autumn. Her mother took her abroad in a mood of noble resignation. She herself had no wish at all to undertake the tedious journey; it was done for Celia's benefit, since daughters must be given every advantage.

The trip to Switzerland was to give Celia an opportunity of meeting young people. It was indeed suggested by the mother that Celia might on this trip find herself a husband. The possibility was of course sadly contemplated, with the faintest shivers quickly suppressed . . . You know what it would mean, the mother might just as well have said . . .

Poor mother. Yes, in spite of everything it was poor mother. What a little, narrow, fanatical life she had led, casting out companionship, driving one daughter away, forever recollecting her husband with distaste. Yet after all she must have loved him. To ask with her last breath—literally her last breath—to be buried in the same grave!

Celia, who had never been in love except distantly, pined her mother with all her heart. For of course she had not found a husband by the side of Lake Thun. True, she had played feverish tennis with a presentable young Swiss. But that was not allowed to blossom, for her mother decided the hotel was not all it might have been,

and they had moved after ten days down the shore to Interlaken.

Celia's opposite neighbor in the train was a woman of sixty or so who seemed anxious that everyone should know she was a seasoned traveller. Celia, unaccompanied, was an obvious victim.

"Where, where are you going?" she asked at once.

Celia said she was going to Cortina.

"Cortina? You are going to Cortina? Now what gave you that idea?" Again she rushed on—"Well, there are some who think the lake very fine. For myself I prefer Como, though of course it's supposed to be spoilt. I am staying at Cernobbio. My hotel is right on the lake and my window faces the water. Cortina I never liked."

"But perhaps I may," Celia suggested.

"Of course there are plenty who do like Cortina. But you must have fine weather for a place like that. When it rains in Italy it's very wet indeed. I'm not at all put off by all this talk of war, are you? No, of course you're not or you wouldn't be here."

Fortunately Celia was travelling second class on the boat, which freed her from this rather oppressive companion.

Soon the doubts, the fears, the rumours of war were receding. After the night of the Simplon tunnel she looked upon the mountains, upon forests which spoke only of eternity. The sun was shining, the sky entirely clear. She was filled with an ecstasy of excitement, of joy in her own long-delayed freedom. She did not stop to wonder if it came too late or to ask herself what she expected it to bring her. She knew only that life quite suddenly held more than long weeks at Rougemont and holidays subjecting herself to her mother's demands.

The terrace had been glassed and now this long paved hall with the vine growing inside and out was the dining-room of the Albergo Miralago. Beyond was the lake. In the centre of the lake swam the island with the colored houses mounting its steep sides and the monastery at the top. Beyond again, on the far shore, the mountains rose. At dinner-time a pink sunset lay upon the tops of the mountains and in the waters of the lake. Outside the hotel the café tables held a sprinkling of residents and day-trippers.

English visitors sat at two other tables beside Celia's. One was occupied by an elderly man and his son; the old man was called Colonel Grandson and his son's name was Robert. At the second table sat a family called Meers. The family consisted of husband, wife and one child, but after four days in Cortina Celia had not set eyes on Mrs. Meers. She was ill, it seemed, and her meals had to be taken up to her.

The husband and small boy were there at lunch time. At dinner the man sat alone.

After these three days of solitude Celia was ready for better company than her own. This disappointed her, for she had supposed that she was self-sufficient. She wished that Mrs. Meers would put in an appearance. She had spoken briefly to the small boy, but he seemed doubtful of her intentions. His father made the greetings appropriate to the time of day and thereafter gave his attention either to the child or to a book. Colonel Grandson and his son had so far been entirely uncommunicative; neither had seen fit to say good morning.

Celia had arrived at Cortina in the late evening. There was still some

lingering of flame in the sky and this was held within the glassy stillness of the lake. As the station taxi hurtled down the cobbled hill towards the town, which stood out from the shore on a small peninsula, she wondered what sort of a place she would have come to, remembering the conversation in the train: her travel-weary imagination was piling up doubts and suspicions, when the car turned sharply into the piazza.

At once all was changed. Lights blazed, doubled by reflections in the lake, the cafe tables were full. There was an accordion playing and someone roughly singing. It was Sunday, and holiday-makers had come from the manufacturing town seven or eight miles away at the far end of the lake. As the car drew up outside the hotel, the proprietor ran to open the door and hand her out, speaking to her in English before she could attempt her own few words of Italian.

The hotel was big and only a quarter full. Immediately all her doubts returned. Was the place ill-kept, dirty? But the proprietor, conducting her up the wide marble stairway with its red carpet and gilt banisters, assured her that he had few guests because of the unsettled times. But the English, he said, would always come abroad. He led her along corridors and at last her door was thrown open.

Wherever in the world she might go after this, Celia knew that she would never forget her room at the Miralago in Cortina. It was dark and ornate, with crimson satin covers and yellow satin lampshades. The bedposts were carved, the curtains at the long windows were ball-fringed. But those windows opened on to an iron verandah hung with vines, and immediately below was the water of the lake, like pink glass, and the rosy mound of the magical island. As Celia stepped out from her room the singing below began again, but this time the song was plaintive and well sung.

The strange feeling of decay, of beauty in ruins, the old enchantment of roses and moonlight, of wine and singing, and all the ingredients of romantic memory rose up from the lake itself and shone for her like a gleaming blade only waiting to be taken by the hill. In the astounding realization that the old tales were true, that the painters had not lied, she stood spellbound on the balcony.

But after three days, when she had walked by the lake, had sat reading in the sun, had drunk her capuccini at a table on the piazza, had climbed to the summit of the Sasso Monte and looked at the view, had bought and written and sent picture postcards to the members of the staff who would expect them — then suddenly she found that she was at the end of her resources.

On the fifth day she plucked up courage and asked Meers how his wife was.

"How kind of you," he said at once, as though all along he had been hoping for just such an inquiry. "We've not caught in a storm out on the lake a week ago, and she was badly chilled. She doesn't seem to be able to shake it off."

"Have you been long in Cortina?" Celia asked.

"Two weeks — and another two to come. Perhaps this is the last time, so we must make the most of it."

At first she thought that he meant some financial disaster had befallen him, or that his work took him to some remote part of the world. But what he meant, of course, was that there might be a war.

"I can't believe it," she said, longing for reassurance.

"No one can," he replied.

He was a man in the late forties, tall, with a restrained yet humorous face. Celia supposed he must have married late, since the child could not have been more than six or seven.

"Will you drink your coffee with me?" he suggested. "Colonel Grandson will be here in a moment too."

They sat out on the terrace in the warm evening, waiting for the coffee to be brought to them.

"I hope you'll go up and have a word with my wife," Meers was saying. "She'd be delighted to meet you."

"I should like to. I've tried to make friends with your boy, but he's very suspicious."

Meers laughed. "He's very much an Englishman away from home. And I'm as bad. I should have paid you the attention a compatriot deserves."

Later he told her that they had come from England by road, and that they would be driving to Milan for the day at the end of the week. Would she care to come too?

"I'm afraid it will be appallingly hot away from the water," he said. "But I have some business I want to see to, and it will make quite a pleasant trip, I dare say."

JUST then the Grandsons came from the dining-room and sat down with Meers and Celia on the terrace. The Colonel insisted on ordering cognac for all of them, and his son sat next to Celia and talked politely about foreign travel, of which he seemed after all to have done very little, and that most circumspectly. This pale, rather vague man had a shy charm which pleased Celia. He and his father would be motoring to Varese the next day, for they were "collecting" lakes, and he asked Celia if she would care to go with them.

Celia began to feel gay. The brandy warmed her and removed the last of her self-conscious loneliness. Presently she left the men, saying she would go and visit Mrs. Meers. She knocked on the door next to her own. When she had knocked and been called in, her Dutch courage evaporated and she began to feel embarrassed.

"Your husband sent me," she explained. "He thought you might be bored and lonely up here."

"So I am. Who are you? We haven't met, have we?"

She was sitting up in bed reading. The room was cloudy and a tray full of cigarette ends was on the bedside table. She wore her hair rather long, too long for her age. Celia immediately decided. She looked at first suspiciously and then inquisitively at Celia, and finally smiled.

"I'm sure you're the swan lady David's always talking about. He's a funny child but he's extraordinarily accurate."

"Is it because I have a long neck?" Celia asked, glad of her renewed composure.

"Not at all. It's your lovely white neck," she laughed as she spoke, and there was a sharp little note of mockery in her voice that made Celia turn her head to the nearby mirror. It was true that she had a long neck, and the sun had not touched it.

"Perhaps it's because I stand on my head in the water," she suggested.

"Wouldn't he love it if you did?"

The invalid laughed again, but this time frankly. "Sit down and talk to me. You must try and keep my men-folk amused for me. Edward is very cross, I'm afraid. But I ask you, can I help it?"

"Of course not," Celia assured her. But immediately she wondered. This

was a very healthy-looking invalid. She was sunburnt and her eyes were clear, and somehow she gave an impression of vigor.

"Are you staying long?" Mrs. Meers asked conversationally. "What do you think of the place? I'm bored with it — bored, bored."

"That's because you have to stay in bed."

"Oh, you're one of those people quite sure of cause and effect," Nina Meers said, laughing slightly. "Perhaps it is because I'm bored that I have to stay in bed." She gave Celia a mocking glance. "I believe you're shocked."

"No — incredulous. It's so lovely outside. The sun shines — and then — well, the mountains."

"Perhaps you haven't travelled much. Some people don't."

This rudeness was tempered by a lazy charm. Celia felt not so much insulted as challenged.

"Some people are not able to," she retorted. "I, for example, teach history in a girl's boarding school, and my horizon until lately has been bounded by that and the demands of my widowed mother."

"A schoolmistress? Are you? Well, my dear, I can assure you that you don't look like one. But if you're to amuse Edward while I'm upstairs I shouldn't tell him how you make your living. He doesn't like the breed."

"Thank you for warning me," Celia replied dryly.

She stayed for nearly an hour with Mrs. Meers. After the preliminary skirmish they fell into a sharp cross-talk which both appeared to find stimulating. This was one of those encounters which might lead either way — after this they would be devoted friends, or bitter enemies. Presently Edward Meers came in, and after about ten minutes Celia said good-night and went away.

When she got to her own room she sat on the bed, feeling vaguely deflated. She was aware of conflict between husband and wife but knew nothing of the circumstances and so could not allay her sympathy.

The next day was not so fine. The Grandsons greeted Celia when she came downstairs and spoke of the prospects for the trip to Varese. She had forgotten about it and now she wished that she need not go. But it was impossible to escape the engagement. David Meers stood outside on the piazza and watched them as they made their preparations for departure.

"He'd like to come, too," Robert Grandson said. "What about it, young man?"

The boy's face was transformed. "I could ask." He rushed indoors. They heard his feet thumping up the stairs. After a little while, during which the picnic lunch was stowed in the car and the Colonel came out, David returned.

"Thank you very much for inviting me, sir, but I've got to stay."

He was red about the ears. Celia felt herself flush, too, with sympathy and indignation. She knew it was not her business, that she was interfering, but she could not restrain herself.

"Shall I go and ask for you? As a special favour. Perhaps they think you'll be a worry to the Colonel. I could explain."

Hope returned. "Please," he said.

Celia went quickly into the hotel and up to the Meers' room. She was called in and when she got inside she found herself absurdly nervous.

"I'm going with the Grandsons, too, Mrs. Meers. I'll see that David doesn't bother the Colonel."

Meers had been out on the balcony when Celia came in, but he turned back into the room.

"That's an excellent idea. How kind of Miss Scarfe, Nina. That clears up everything."

"Pray make all your own arrangements," Nina Meers said. She plumped her pillow and lay down with her back to Celia, who looked doubtfully at Edward.

"Thank you so much," he said firmly. "It was just that we didn't want the boy to make a nuisance of himself."

Sitting beside Celia in the back seat of the car, David occasionally looked round at her and smiled. It was a confident smile that pleased and flattered her, and yet she was aware that in gaining it she had not added to the harmony of his parents' relationship. Presently, he began to chatter to her and she forgot her scruples.

That was a day that both of them would remember. The early greyness cleared away and the mountains shook off their turbans of cloud. On the shore of the lake, where they picnicked grandly on ham and salami, while rulla, cheese, peaches, and a bottle of chianti, David took off his sandals and went to paddle. Later they left the lake and went up into the clean, smart little town, where the shop windows were bright with patterned silks. In the main square they sat eating ices and watching the fountain play. Now David sat next to the old man and they talked solemnly together.

"They are well matched," Robert Grandson said to Celia. He smiled. "My father loves to show off and David is an ideal audience." He looked across at his father and his eyes were soft with love. "He is 39 next birthday," he said to her, almost in a whisper.

It was certainly hardly credible. He was so upright and certain, so clear-eyed and firm-voiced. Robert and Celia left the pair of them together and walked down the main street looking in the shops.

"This will be the old man's last trip abroad," Robert Grandson said suddenly, as they stood before a confectioner's window, wondering what to buy for David.

"Oh, surely not—he'll live to be 100. When the war comes it will kill him," the old man's son replied. "I don't mean any weapon will kill him. But I shall be called up—I hold a commission in the Territorials—and he'll have to go away somewhere out of London. He'll never survive that."

It had not occurred to Celia that a man could be bound to his father as tightly as a woman to her mother. Here was this man in the middle thirties, the youngest son, it seemed, of a large family, who had stayed with his father all his life and now blanched from the thought of separation.

"What is your work?" she asked. "If there really should be a war, mightn't it keep you occupied?"

He made the most astonishing reply. "I'm afraid not, I'm a writer of children's stories."

"And I am a schoolmarm," she said in return, "so, you see, we have interests in common."

On the way home Celia sat beside Robert as he drove, and David sat with the Colonel in the back.

Now Cortanza took on for Celia new colors, new beauty. The group within the hotel suddenly confessed. The separation of the English, even more studied abroad than at home, was broken up at last and they talked together and arranged little outings and drank their coffee together after dinner on the terrace above the water.

When Celia climbed in the early evening to the summit of the Sacro Monte, David went with her and sometimes the colonel walked as far as the first seat and sat there until they returned. On Tuesdays there was a market on the piazza. Very early in the morning the carts began to clatter down the

hill to the town and, with the first light, the stalls were set up and the bargaining soon began. You could buy anything you wanted in the market, meat or knitting wool, dress material or fish, bread or boots, honey or magazines. The first market of her holiday, Celia watched alone, but David went with her the second time and they wandered round and round, entranced. David's one desire was for a bowl of goldfish, but even his father, who was usually sympathetic, thought this unwise.

As for his mother, she remained in her room, though she was no longer in bed. She would sit out on her balcony reading and writing endless letters. Once or twice she went for a walk by herself in the cool evening. But she never appeared at meals and her place was no longer laid. Sometimes she asked Celia to go up, too, and then they drank coffee together on the balcony, looking out over the lake and idly gossiping.

"Come downstairs now," Celia said one evening. "You are quite well. I believe you are staying up here out of sheer perversity. Admit it."

"I never wanted to come to Cortanza," Nina said, "so it is understandable, surely, if I take no part in the business. I wanted to go to Rapallo."

"It's so much farther."

"It's so much more fun. I have friends there. But Edward doesn't like them."

She smiled slightly. Celia said, made bold by her own anxieties, "You are punishing David, too."

"David is quite happy. Thanks to you, I will admit. You're very good to him and I'm most grateful." Again there was the mocking, narrow smile. "I wish you could make Edward happy, too. He is very glum. Couldn't you take him a little bit out of himself, Miss Scarfe? Couldn't you?"

"We'll do our best," Celia said a little stiffly.

Nina laughed. "Poor Miss Scarfe," she said.

WHEN Celia had been two weeks in Cortanza the Grandsons left. Everyone stood outside the hotel and waved them on their way. Celia turned to go indoors. She felt guilty and at the same time defiant. She should have left today, too, but she could not tear herself away. She had booked her room for another week, reckless of the expense. She walked back into the hotel with Edward Meers at her side. As he thrust open the door for her, she looked up to thank him, and her heart turned slowly in her breast. Like a porpoise, she thought hysterically. With difficulty she dragged her glance away. She went straight upstairs and shut herself in her room.

She sat on the edge of the bed and pressed both hands over her heart. But the dressing-table mirror was altogether too near. She caught sight of the absurdly dramatic gesture and began to laugh. But it was not easy laughter. She lay on her bed, prostrate on the crimson brocade cover. Now she knew why she had not left Cortanza on the appointed day.

First of all Celia told herself that she was ripe for this, that it was bound to happen whether she wanted it or no, trying to laugh it off as the inevitable romanticism of a woman well past thirty who found herself for the first time at liberty. Then she told herself that she might have had the good sense to direct her attention towards the unmarried Robert Grandson. Then she admitted that she had actually made some half-hearted at-

tempt to do so. Then she gave in and wept.

Then impatient of her own emotion, Celia rose and went to lean on the iron balustrade outside her room and look down on the life of the village. Three women were washing their linen in the lake, each kneeling on a little wooden platform. Over by the butcher's shop on the far side of the piazza a knife grinder was at work. So the place had looked yesterday and so it would look tomorrow. Nothing had changed but the mind of the beholder.

David ran out from the hotel, looked up and saw Celia. His face brightened and he called to her.

"You did say 'ices'."

"Just coming," she called back.

She went into the room and stood helplessly trying to reduce her thoughts. Well, what now? What, indeed, but heartache. She began to feel angry, to mutter to herself at her own folly. She splashed water into the gilt-rimmed basin and bathed her eyes. Aware of David impatiently waiting for her to appear, she hurried, slapping powder on her face. At last there was no sign of grief or self-reproach or despair; they were hidden as such things must always be hidden. She ran downstairs to meet the child as promised.

David ran ahead of Celia across the piazza to the cafe of his choice, where tables under striped umbrellas were set on a long pier stretching out into the lake.

"This one," he said. He pulled out Celia's chair and waited till she sat down. "Is that the way it's done?" he asked.

"That's the way," she said, amused, recovering her spirits.

Then a girl in a striped apron came from the cafe to take their order. When Celia had ordered coffee for herself and a large ice for David, she saw Edward coming from the hotel across the piazza. The bright sun lightened his tussore suit until it shone, and his face and hands looked almost black in contrast. He stood looking round him vaguely. Celia knew that he was seeking them, and she sat there with her hands on the table before her, waiting for him to look their way, waiting for the moment of recognition, warmed by the certain knowledge that when he saw them he would smile and come towards them.

David saw his father suddenly, leapt to his feet and let out a piercing cry. Then, just as Celia had imagined, Edward turned, his face lightened, he waved and began to move in their direction. Presently he came within range and the focus shifted. Here was no one but Nina's husband, David's father, who sat down with them and smiled to see his son. In self-defence, Celia asked for Nina.

"She'll be glad when we get home," he said briefly. For a moment his face wore an expression of bitterness, then he shrugged it away and gave his order to the girl who came with a tray and set down Celia's cup before her. Then she produced David's ice, and there were loud cries from all of them, for it was indeed a work of art. David sat and gazed at it, his spoon poised, uncertain where to attack.

"It'll melt," Celia and Edward said together.

They sat there in the sun and the lake spread away around them and it was hard to believe that there was any other place but Cortanza in all the world.

"Only one more week," Celia said. Her voice light, her heart sank like the pebble she flicked over the railing into the water.

Edward asked her, "What will you do for the rest of the holidays?" For of

course Nina had very soon told him that Celia taught in a girls' school. "Three or four weeks left, aren't there?"

"Three. I shall stay in London. I've booked a room—I'll just have breakfast and then get my meals out. There's always a lot to do when I'm in London and it's better not to be tied." She spoke a little defensively. It all sounded very dreary.

"You could come and stay with us," David said.

"Thank you, David. But, you see, there is a great deal I must do."

"Oh, couldn't you come—couldn't you?"

Suppose they asked me, Celia thought. She imagined days with Nina, a Nina suddenly expansive and friendly, and then Edward coming home in the evening in time to drink sherry with them in a pale drawing-room. In fact, she had no idea how Edward lived nor had she the least idea what color the drawing-room might be. She knew only that they lived in London and that David was going away to school in the autumn.

"But you must certainly come and see us," Edward said. "She must find time for that, mustn't she, David? We'll get Mummy to telephone and ask her to dinner."

"For a whole Sunday," David corrected.

At that moment he spotted the postman and went dashing off to meet him, leaving the tea unfinished.

"Of course if there really is a war," Edward told Celia, "I shall send Nina and David into the country. We've a small cottage in Sussex and he can go to school from there."

"What will you do?" she asked, bold because she was frightened.

"I shall have to stay in London. I'm too old for the Services—for the time being, anyway. They'll take off all the young men before they come to me."

David came running back with four or five letters. Two were for Celia, two for Edward, one for Nina. David held Nina's letter behind his back and gobbled the remains of his ice-cream; then he ran off back to the hotel. Edward asked Celia if he might read his letters, and so she opened hers, too.

One of Celia's letters was from Elaine, the other from Mary Davenport. The Headmistress' letter was full of plans that would be put into action should war break out. The air-raid shelters that had been sketched prepared at the time of Munich were being hurriedly completed. Elaine wrote about the war, too. She said that James would come under government control and would be sent anywhere.

Edward finished his letters first and sat watching Celia. Looking up suddenly, she found him waiting for her. She smiled, but with a reluctant sadness.

"What is it?" Celia asked. But she knew, even though he made no answer. Her heart pounded and she folded her letters with trembling fingers. She was not prepared. . . . She looked at him incredulously. Yes, it was so. In his slow, distant glance, in his smile, he handed her the certainty.

At this moment Nina, leaving her room for the first time that day, came from the hotel and began to walk towards the cafe. Edward rose without haste and pulled out a chair for her.

"What will you have, Nina?"

"I don't want anything." She held her letter in her hand. "It's from Marian. She says there are digging trenches and all day long there are people filling sandbags. We must go home."

"Must we?" He did not look at Celia. "Think, my dear. If it is to be

war it will be a long time before we see Cortanza again."

"Edward, I believe you're mad! Do you want us to be trapped here? Interrupted?"

"Please keep calm, Nina. Nothing has happened yet to justify panic. Marian always loses her head."

"We can all lose our heads. It seems, my dear Edward, before you'll take things in hand. Doesn't it occur to you that you have responsibilities at home?"

"I've had a letter from England, too. Norman says I'm to finish my holiday here. He'll call me home soon enough, if it's really necessary."

"What do you think, Celia?" Nina asked.

"I think perhaps the holiday should be finished." To convince herself she added—"What will all these Italians think of us if we go scuttling home?"

"I don't care what they think," Nina assured her. "My idea of face-saving is obviously rather more practical than yours. Very well. We stay. But I shall pack, so that we can leave at a moment's notice."

When she sprang up and went back to the hotel, David went with her.

Edward made no attempt to follow Nina. He remained at the table frowning.

"I don't want to go home," he said at last, gloomily. "What do you think really?"

Celia hesitated. She looked at his bent head.

"I don't want to go home either," she said. And then she hurried on as though she would cover up what she had so clearly betrayed. "Perhaps we should ask somewhere—I mean at a consultant or something. We could telephone."

"Let's go on the lake instead," he said. "Let's get away from the whole idea."

He got up and unexpectedly pulled her to her feet. His hands, though they were firm and hard, were yet the hands of a man who works with his brain, they were smooth and the nails well cared for. Before she could make any protest, he had made his way to the steps where the boats were tied. She followed awkwardly. Nina would look from her window and see them on the lake.

All the same, she stepped into the boat. Neither of them spoke till they were a hundred yards and more from the shore. From the water, Cortanza looked a toy village, an intruder among the mountains. Soon the island was the nearer land, then that, too, receded. Still Edward did not speak.

At last Celia said rather anxiously. "We mustn't go too far or we shall be late for lunch."

"Oh, to hell with lunch," he said. He rowed on round the far side of the island, then rested on his oars. He sat and faced Celia almost insolently.

"It's not because Nina's being a devil," he said, defiant. "It would have happened anyway, anywhere. We had only to meet. . . . I wish you hadn't come to Cortanza."

"I don't wish that," Celia said in a small voice.

"Then I have imagined it all," he said.

"Oh, no! No!"

He began to talk to her then, and there she sat in the narrow boat and listened to him, and the water slid dancing by so that the boat rose a little and danced too. The words of the boaters fell with a little splash into the silence that had gone before. What happens next? What are the words

that must follow these so prosaically, almost instantly spoken?

There could be no movement each towards each, no handclasp even, because of eyes that could be watching from the windows of the hotel, from the terrace, from the piazza, from the passing boats, and the little steamer jussling from one side of the lake to the other.

"David will be furious with us for going off and leaving him," Celia said. She added in panic, "We should have brought him. They'll wonder. . . ."

"David? David is always the duenna, the shining sword, the grille." He smiled slightly. "You see how romantic I am becoming already? If there is a war, I shall leave my work as soon as possible and see if I can get one of those jobs for the old 'uns they have at places like the Air Ministry. So long as it's something connected with flying, however remotely, I am really a solicitor." He looked up at her then and grinned unexpectedly.

"Celia—"

"Well?"

"Is it really true? Has it happened?"

She smiled then. "It's happened." And their mood immediately eased and lightened. Presently she asked why Nina hated Cortanza, partly because she was curious, partly because she felt that Nina's name must be spoken.

"She wanted to go to Rapallo. She would have met a friend there. If I had not plenty of evidence that she is essentially cold I might suppose they were lovers."

She looked at him quickly, astonished at his imperception. Nina would be cold only from distaste. And that there could be distaste, how strange! Celia looked with sudden confidence into the face of the man opposite and her heart ached.

"She didn't want David," he went on. "So she resents him. Since she had the child she has a blue, swollen vein in her left ankle—she'll never forgive me that."

Celia said, "I'm living for the first time. Do you know that? I've never been in love. When I was a girl there were only little feelings, very quickly gone. Well, I suppose my mother saw to that."

"I swear we shall be together," he said.

But she had no idea whether he meant he would get rid of his wife and take her instead, or whether she was expected to be the patient sweetheart. In her present mood she found no objection to either course. She was bemused, bewitched by the circumstances and by their setting. Nothing mattered but that they had found one another. However it ended, whatever heartache waited out of sight, she would never cease to thank God that she had chosen to spend her holiday in Cortanza.

When they got back to the shore Edward handed Celia out of the boat, holding her arm warmly and strongly, reassuringly. Then they went in to luncheon. For the first time since Celia came to the Albergo Miralago, Nina was sitting in her place at their table. She did not smile when they came in. Her face had lost the look of mockery and amusement which Celia had found so difficult to assess. Her mouth was tight and her eyes cold. Opposite her, David sat looking subdued and doubtful.

"You went in a boat," he accused his father, as Edward sat down and shook out his napkin.

"It was very hot where we were sitting. Miss Scarfe was getting a headache."

David wriggled round in his chair and looked at Celia.

"Is it better now?" he demanded, unappeased.

"It's gone."

Nina said in her chilly voice, "Sit up properly, David, and don't wriggle about. You'll have your chair over."

The following Tuesday news came of the Russo-German non-aggression pact. The tidings ran through the hotel and through all Cortanza, and everyone looked sideways at the English visitors.

During the morning Celia and David went for a walk. They climbed to the summit of the Sacro Monte and there was the faintest hint of ending summer in the air. Leaning on the iron balustrade before the monastery chapel they looked down upon Cortanza, the lake and the island, the mountains beyond, the boats, the birds, the flowers — and even the child was sad. In her heart, Celia knew now that the war must come. She no longer fought the conviction, turning away from it, hiding from it. How long must it last — how many years? Would she ever come to Cortanza again, ever stand with David on holiday, with the unfamiliar countryside laid below her? She put her arm across the child's narrow shoulders. He was seven years old. How long, then?

"Well, David, the holiday's nearly over. Will you be glad to get home?" she said.

He hung on the balustrade. "Let's see how far we can spit."

It was noon. The bell in the monastery turret beat three times, and was echoed by three separate tongues near or far away. One bell was booming and faintly unctuous, another gay in habitual greeting; a third, slightly cracked, had a timid humble sound.

"Time for home," Celia said. She took the boy by the hand and started down the winding path. By the time David and Celia had made their way down the long track and reached the hotel, Edward and Nina were already at lunch. Celia came with David into the dining-room and saw that a fourth place was set at the Miers' table.

"You're lunching with us today," Edward said.

David looked pleased. Each of the seven other occupied tables had its two or four occupants, and these all turned to stare at the English as they sat together.

"How soon can you get packed?" Edward asked Celia. "We shall leave this afternoon, and you're coming with us."

"But I couldn't . . . of course I'm not going home by train."

She added, "I've got my ticket."

"It's no good arguing with Edward," Nina said. "There's plenty of room. Have you much luggage?"

"Two suitcases."

"You must leave one to be sent on," Edward said, "and we'll do the same. Try to pack the unimportant things in that one — you may not see it again."

"It's very good of you to find room for me," Celia said conventionally, looking at Nina.

"You'll be invaluable," she said. "You and David can amuse one another. He gets bored on a long drive."

As she sat eating her lunch Celia thought not that this was the last meal at Cortanza, not that they were on the point of flight, not that war was imminent — but only of the long drive home which must increase the bond between them and seemed to give some hope for the future. Just then it seemed only that by losing them she would lose good friends, not that to part with Edward was to part with her first love.

Her fingers trembled slightly as she picked up her fork. She realised with horror that she was making capital

out of a most bitter situation. That they must drive her to her door in South Kensington was at this moment more important to her than that men in high places were conferring gravely together, that hundreds and thousands of young men were waiting, arrested, for what fate might descend upon them. She dared not look at Edward, and she dreaded what Nina must find to read in her face. She kept her eyes on her plate, or turned to speak to David.

"What time must we start?" she asked.

"As soon as possible. Nina has been clearing up, and I've been checking over the car."

"I must ask for my bill."

"I've done that. They'll bring it to you."

As soon as the bill appeared Celia left the table and went upstairs. She started feverishly pulling things out of drawers and cupboards. The business of selection threw her into a nervous confusion — what to take, what to leave? And was it indeed possible that what she left she might not see again? She could not believe it. She could not grasp the sinister urgency of the time. She was consumed with tenderness and impatience and she found it almost impossible to concentrate on the job in hand.

Presently Nina was knocking on the door.

"It's two o'clock. We must go. Are you ready?"

She called, "I'm coming."

IT was only two hours since she had stood on the mount with David and heard the bells ringing the Angelus. She snapped down the lids of her suitcases and stood both by the door. She went swiftly out on to the balcony and looked for the last time over the lake. The place had become so familiar to her in these weeks that she knew she would never forget any line of color or of it would remain sharply drawn in her memory; not only because it was the place where she had fallen in love for the first time.

A knock at the door brought her back into the room. The porter picked up the suitcase she was taking with her. She followed him out of the room and down the long corridor to the stairs. The car was at the door, the luggage stowed, David already sitting on the back seat.

"I've kept a place for you," he called to her.

The proprietor and his wife stood bowing on the hotel steps as the car moved off, but with an aloofness very different from the eager greeting of a few weeks ago. Sitting in the back seat with David, Celia looked as long as she might at the quiet, sun-filled piazza, where the afternoon lay undisturbed, the shops shut for the long midday and an eyeless sleep upon the place.

Then the car turned into the narrow cobbled hill and began to climb towards the main road. Soon the village and the lake lay below them, the holiday was far behind, and nothing remained but the business of getting home, of getting home in time.

The road was dusty once the lake was left behind. It led up towards Domodossola and the Simplon Pass, and they expected to cross into Switzerland in a little over an hour. This estimate was altogether too hopeful. The road was atrocious, full of holes which the low built car could only negotiate at about ten miles an hour.

"We should have gone the other way," Nina said crossly. "I know it's longer, but at least it's got a reasonable surface. This is impossible."

"It's a shorter road," Edward replied, and Celia knew that they had argued the toss, the unknown short cut, the known road that took them some miles out of their way.

After this exchange they drove in silence, jolted and shaken, and in terror for the back axle and the tyres.

The worst bit of road was passed without disaster, and Celia sat looking sometimes from the window, sometimes at the back of Edward's head. She knew nothing about him, nothing. Only his face told her whether he was honest. She had no idea what his tastes were or whether he was good at his job. She could only guess how old he was, what books he read, whether he believed in God. It was as though she had fallen in love with an outline, with a strong face and a mouth quick to humor. There was no sense or reason in it, and yet it bound her utterly.

Nina sat with map spread on her knee and smoked incessantly.

"Left," Nina said.

"Are you sure? I thought we went right here."

"Left — it's shorter."

Because they were already behind time, Edward did not argue but turned off as she directed. After five miles or so the road grew steep and narrow. There was no other traffic. The mountains reared above and around them.

"This is wrong," Edward said.

He stopped the car and took the map from Nina.

"You see," she said, "it's miles shorter this way."

So it is. But we can't go over the mountains, my dear, where there isn't a pass."

He started up the car and began to look for a place to turn. This was not easy. When he was manoeuvring across the road the car jolted and jarred and the front near tyre went flat.

"Get out," Edward said. "We'll have to shove her to the side."

Celia propped David in the corner, for he had fallen asleep. She and Nina got out and the three of them edged the car to the side of the road. Edward was bitterly angry but he was silent with it. As soon as he began getting out the tools David woke up and climbed out of the car.

Nina walked up and down the road smoking while Edward changed the wheel, helped by Celia and hindered by David. When Nina was called to take her place again she looked at Celia's fidgety hands with amusement.

"Edward's really quite capable of doing the job alone, Celia. You've got a great streak of oil on your skirt."

"I'll have Celia in front," Edward said. "She may be capable of reading a map."

"I've no doubt she is. I expect she teaches geography to the girls."

Celia looked helplessly from one to the other, wanting to do as Edward said, wanting to sit beside him, and yet embarrassed by the quarrel.

In the end they travelled as before, but in a stonier silence. It was almost dusk when they reached Domodossola, and the frontier, some miles farther on, closed at seven. They would have to spend the night at Domo.

They were on their way by eight o'clock the next morning. There were two other English cars ahead of them and one of these had some trouble with the customs.

Because of what he had found in the first car, the customs man was on his mettle and the remaining cars were searched so thoroughly that there was an hour's delay.

It had been drizzling when they left Domodossola, and now, although the rain had stopped, low clouds hung over

the mountains and mist curled above the waterfalls.

As they descended the pass the sun came out. They had their picnic lunch in the valley, with water running close at hand, where David washed the mugs and knives and felt very pleased with himself. Ahead of them the road wound away through Brig into the Rhone valley. Here they were remote from all alarms and it was only when a car carrying a G.B. plate came skimming down from the summit and rushed by without the usual greeting that dread again infected them. They sat in silence watching the car tearing along the white road below them.

"Time to go," Edward said at last. And they went reluctantly to the car.

That day they drove hard. Above the road on either side the foothills were covered with a patterned cloth of vineyards. At times Celia forgot why they were hurrying home. She saw only that the beauties of this countryside were too swiftly snatched away, she knew only that haste reduced her time of happiness. Too soon, too soon they would reach the coast and the last lap of the journey would begin. The little world that was a ship at sea would enclose them briefly. But after that...

In fact they had trouble with the car before they left Switzerland at Vallorbe and began the climb up the great map of France. Nina was all for stopping at the first garage they saw, but Edward insisted on finding one that specialised in his particular make of car. He turned up his list and found what he wanted at Besancon. This would take them slightly out of their way, but he insisted that it was the wisest course.

They were delayed a whole day at Besancon, while Edward argued with mechanics who assured him gloomily that the only way to deal with the fault was to strip down the engine. However, they reached a compromise. Celia walked with Nina and David by the river where the ancient buildings stood against the water.

"We shall have to go on by train," Nina said.

When they got back to the hotel, Edward was waiting with news that the car was promised for eight next morning. When Nina protested that they should take a train, he told her what he had heard in the town, of trains left on sidings for hours at a time while supply trains were on the move. "Anybody'd think the war had started," Nina cried.

"To all intents I suppose it has," the rest of the day passed somehow. Next morning the car was ready by half-past eleven and they were in Rheims by early evening.

They reached the coast on Saturday, August 26. The place was in confusion and there seemed little hope of crossing that day. They drove on to Calais and then to Dunkirk, but the story was the same. Early next morning they were at Ostend. There was room for two on the afternoon boat.

Celia felt that she had seen this coming ever since they left Cortanza. She stood listening to the booking clerk delivering the information and her last hold on reality was finally relinquished. She was not aware of what happened between then and the moment when she stood with Edward on the quayside and waved to Nina and David.

Presently the boat cast off and began to swing out into the harbor. Nina looked at them once more and once more waved, but with indifference. At last the boat became no longer an extension of the shore being dragged out into the water, but a world of its own.

Edward took Celia's arm and drew her out of the crowd. They got into the waiting car and drove into the

town, from which the air of holiday was being rapidly drained.

"We'll get away tomorrow," Edward said. He turned then for the first time and looked at Celia. He smiled, putting his hand on hers, which were tightly clasped on her knee. "Don't look so frightened."

She hedged, not yet quite certain. "It's a frightening situation."

"You pretend you mean the international situation," Celia Scarfe, but it is the domestic situation which alarms you."

"Perhaps," she agreed, realising then where she stood.

"Here's a reasonable looking hotel," he said.

IT was Edward who signed the register. An elderly porter took them up in the lift. The procession of three made its way slowly down the long carpeted corridor. First the man with the luggage, then Celia, then Edward bringing up the rear and cutting off retreat.

But this precaution was unnecessary. As the trap closed on her she relinquished her liberty and her purpose freely and gladly. She went into the room ahead of Edward. She put down her bag and gloves and sat down in front of the dressing-table.

She pushed at her hair and looked at the room in the mirror. The walls were dark with a floral paper, the furniture an almost black oak. Edward's back was turned as he watched the porter out of the room and closed the door. Then he shifted and came towards her.

It was as she saw Edward's face in the mirror, suddenly doubting, almost shy, that she recognised him at last. After all there was nothing about him that she did not know. He was revealed wholly in the mirror, hesitant, concurred. When he opened his mouth it would be to offer her a way of escape.

Before he could speak she turned and held out her hand.

At Besancon, Celia had written to Mary Davenport telling her that she was on her way home and giving her London address. Mary telephoned the afternoon after Celia reached her room in Kensington.

"You must come to Rougemont tomorrow, Celia."

"The holidays are not finished," Celia said.

"I've written to all the staff suggesting they come back at once."

"There are things I have to do in London."

"Oh, nonsense!" Mrs. Davenport snapped.

Her manner would have confirmed Celia's determination had it been wavering.

"I shall be back on the eighteenth," she said.

Celia and Edward had reached England early on Monday evening, and he had brought her here to this house where she was a stranger, but which, because it was not far from where he lived, had suddenly become home. He carried her luggage upstairs and stood with her looking round the room to which the housekeeper had conducted them. "Will you be lonely?" he asked.

"Shall I?"

"No, I shall be coming to see you."

"Yes," she said. "No! I don't know. We're in England now. Everything is different."

"Is it?"

But of course it wasn't. Everything was the same, as difficult, as intoxicating. "Well," he said, "start unpacking."

So she began stowing her things about the place and he sat watching

her. The face she saw now was not the face she had seen at Cortanza, even when they went together on to the lake. All the outlines were softened. The eyes were bent as in a new direction. The mouth was familiar.

"If there really is war," he said before he left, "and I should be prevented from getting in touch with you—promise you'll go back to school early."

She hesitated. "But you'll be here—"

"Promise me."

"Yes. Very well—I promise."

He went away after only taking her hand and holding it warmly. She was bewildered. This was not how she had supposed things happened. In love there were surely constant embraces, endearments, declarations. But none of these came from Edward save ultimately. He gave her no facile assurances, no words to comfort her when she was alone. But it seemed strange to her because she knew too little. She knew that she was expected to trust him, that she should gladly accept the fact that he was no glib wooer. But she knew, too, that this restraint would bring her anguish, for it was not in her nature to be confident without reassurance. She wondered about Nina. Had she too met with this high hand barrier and lost heart and patience and turned away?

All day Tuesday and Wednesday Celia was alone. She found it hard to leave her room, to leave the quiet silence of the telephone which must surely break the moment she left the house and bring Edward's voice to her room in vain. But she forced herself to go out.

She went alone about London in the fine, sunny days, wandering aimlessly about the empty shops, sitting for hours in the parks, where trenches and shelters were in the making, sandbags piling high.

On Thursday Edward came in search of Celia and gave her the reassurance which during two days of absence she had begun to need. Again he asked for her promise that she would leave London when war was declared, and again she gave it unwillingly. On Saturday, when the time was running out, he telephoned, urging her to go at once. But she stayed.

On Sunday, after all fears had been made concrete and the first siren was still sounding over the south of England, Edward came with the car to Celia's door.

"There's a train at 2.40. Have you packed?"

She was reluctant to admit it, but she had done so an hour ago.

"I drove Nina and David down to the cottage last night. It's only a short drive—an hour and a half or so."

"What could she think you came back for?"

"I don't think I care about that," he said.

She laid her head against his shoulder, uncertain, afraid that this farewell might be the last.

"What shall we do? Oh, what shall we do?"

"Don't worry," he said.

She was afraid he must know how near she was to tears. She wished she might cast her wretchedness on him, that she might weep and cling. But she was learning. She was afraid to feel him draw away, irritated by her collapse. She imagined that by behaving as he seemed to expect her to behave she would increase his love for her. Perhaps she was right.

"There's not much time," he said gently.

"I'm ready." She moved away from him, turning to fasten her suitcase. The Italian labels grinned up at her. She looked around the room for something left behind, but she had packed

everything and there was nothing more to delay her.

At the door suddenly and comfortably it was he who delayed. They went down the stairs reluctantly and Celia looked for her landlady while Edward took the luggage to the car. "I have to go because of my work," Celia explained. "I teach in a girls' boarding-school and the term is to start early."

"I see, Miss Scarfe," the woman replied. She counted out change at her desk, fiddling with a little tin cash-box, spilling notes out of its tray. "We are always escaping together by car," Edward said, laughing slightly when they drove off.

"Together?" She looked away from him out of the window. She did not know how she would control herself. Her eyes were hot with tears. Edward put his hand on hers, but she thrust it away. The brusque rejection rallied her spirits. "All right," she said. "I shan't make a fool of myself."

They lunched extravagantly and then parted on the station platform. Perhaps there might be someone about who would recognise him. With this in mind she held out her hand at the moment of separation. The conventional farewell so curiously saddened his face that she thought she might never doubt him again.

The train was packed. Celia had to stand in the corridor. Edward walked away before the train moved off. She stood watching his receding figure, but then she too, turned away. The train started with a jerk. As she was thrown off her balance and scrambled for a hold, Celia saw a young woman sitting in the corner of a nearby carriage. Tears poured down her cheeks, her face was distorted.

Celia turned away in bitter envy and stared down out of the open window at the dazzle of the metal lines streaming back towards everything that was now lost to her.

When Celia reached Rougemont she found twenty or so girls already assembled and Miss Strutt and Miss Evens in possession of the staff common-room. Looking at the two familiar faces of her colleagues, turned towards her as she came into the room, she experienced a surge of good-natured contempt. Had she ever felt inferior to them, deferred to brilliance in one, to enthusiasm in the other? She smiled and knew the smile lofty. It was the same smile which, coming from Lorenza, had driven her into the arms of Edward Meers. And remembering Lorenza, remembering the smile, feeling it widening her own mouth, she sent the girl an unspoken word of thanks. It was that moment in the garden on the last day of the summer term that had opened her eyes and prepared her for what they might see.

"Gods, Scarfe!" Beryl Strutt cried. "We thought you wouldn't get back!" "I motored home with friends," Celia said.

"Trust our Celia to fall on her feet," Miss Evens remarked. "When did you get back? Quite a narrow shave, wasn't it?"

"Oh yes, we had to hurry," Celia replied.

"I hope you've brought us all back a little piece of majolica," May Evens said in her chilly voice.

"I'm terribly sorry, May. I left my shopping till the last and then, of course, I didn't have a chance."

"We'll forgive you. You didn't happen to fall in love with some decayed count?"

"I don't remember seeing any decayed counts."

"Never mind—I've got news for you. Look at that, my dear!"

She held out her left hand. Extra-

ordinary! She had become engaged. Of them all, Celia would have supposed May Evens the least likely to marry; no man, she had thought, would ever invite that caustic wit and the cold, sharp voice in which it was delivered. How typical of the life she led that May should be once again able to put her in her place. For, unlike May, she could not tell her love. . . . All the exaltation left her. She knew that she was conducting a sordid love affair with a married man. Everything cried out against the judgment, but the sense of sudden shock and shame remained with her. Edward seemed very far away and for a moment she felt she could never see him again.

"Cold?" Beryl Strutt asked.

"A goose walking over my grave."

To change the subject she asked if there was news of Mirette Audemars.

"She's here. It was she who invented the decayed count."

"I thought she might not come back," Celia said, sighing. "I'll go and unpack," she said.

She went slowly to her own room. At the head of the stairs, just outside her door, Mirette Audemars was talking to an agitated Miss Clancy.

"France is not unprepared!" Mirette was saying dramatically. "The mobilisation is complete a whole week. My country shall stand once more between England and Germany, and may the good God give her strength." She raised her hands in a theatrical gesture as she spoke. Then she saw Celia.

"Celia! Ma chere! You are safely returned? Ah, how my heart bled to think of you in that wicked Italy!"

Celia replied to this rather shortly. She asked Mirette if she had had a good holiday and was treated to a torrent of disclaiming assurances. One imagined her spending the whole time in preparation, her face already turned towards the barricades.

"I'm surprised you felt able to leave France," Celia said as she went on to her room.

The familiar room accepted her bleakly. She had been accustomed to return here gladly, as to a haven. She thought of her room at Cortanza and heard again the little slapping sound of the lake water. She thought of the hotel room at Ostend. She felt distracted. She went to the washstand and poured cold water from the pattered ever into the shallow basin. She put her hands in the water and pressed them against the cold china floor of the bowl.

WHEN she had combed her hair there was nothing more to keep Celia in her room. She was obliged to go down-stairs and out into the garden to talk to the girls, as the headmistress had asked her to. She was supposed to find some way of occupying them.

As she crossed the lawn towards the sunken garden where now her quarry had removed in search of the last warmth of the sun, Celia felt herself already absorbed by routine, by obedience to timetable, by acquiescence in this particular mode of life, by acceptance of all the headmistress' dictates.

Even now, a few hours after seeing him walk away down the station platform, she was seeking in her mind for the sound of Edward's voice. It had receded before the overwhelming mass of the commonplace and familiar. Distorted by distance and imagination, his voice seemed thin and immaterial, as though she glimpsed after the memory of a ghost. She told herself that she was tired, and she longed for the moment when she could leave her pupils and all the rest and lie in the dark, alone, remembering.

She went down the three shallow steps into the sunken garden. The girls looked up and there was an immediate movement towards her, as though she was the bearer of important tidings.

That night the sirens sounded again, and in the morning when they sat down to breakfast, tired and edgy, there was already a letter from Edward. She had never received a love letter before and she was afraid to open it. She put it into her pocket to read in privacy.

"There, you see!" Madame Audemars cried to her neighbor. "What did I tell you? It is the count himself! He pursues her!"

To her dismay Celia found herself blushing.

"The count always uses purple ink," she said; "this is red."

But the attempt, though it passed with the real, did not fool the Frenchwoman. She looked sharply at Celia as though she could not quite believe her eyes.

Towards the end of October Edward wrote to Celia, telling her that he had been accepted by the Air Ministry and that he was to take up an administrative job in Cairo. At first she did not realise what this meant. He was going away, like all the rest. She would not see him for a time. But how long a time? She flinched from the thought that it might be two years, three years. When he came back he would have forgotten her. She would pay then for her folly. The shape and texture of the affair seemed at this moment so plain to her that she wondered how she had ever cheated herself into believing it might have a different ending.

Edward was to leave at the end of the month. He was doubtful about asking her to meet him in London, for there had been an air-raid over Edinburgh, the first of the war. She must tell him what to do. If she thought it best he would come to the nearest town. Celia replied that she would come to London.

Edward, of course, was in uniform like the rest. Walking about London with him, Celia felt light-headed, insecure. When she was alone with him she could not believe that they would be parted. It was as though this little, fevered episode was a prelude to their life together. She did not like to think that when she had gone back to Rougemont he would travel to the cottage to say goodbye to Nina and David. She was jealous even of David.

"I wish I might be the last of us to see you."

"You are the last in my thoughts," he said, without looking at her.

They were sitting at dinner on Saturday night.

"Nina talks of going to America and taking the boy with her," Edward said. "She has a married brother there, and he keeps sending cables. It might be the best thing."

"Perhaps so," Celia answered, her eyes on her plate. She liked to think that Nina would be far away. She was increasingly greedy. She wanted everything of him—everything.

Edward said, "Listen to me a moment, Celia. There's something I want to fix up with you. If Nina goes there'll be no further point in keeping on the cottage. Officially I shall sell it. In fact, I shall make it over to you."

"You can't do that!" She felt bewildered. This was the proof she had looked for, but she could not accept it.

"I want to know that you have a home. I shall be happy if I can think that it is yours. You must have something—you can't go on calling that

blasted school home. You can let the cottage, if you like—it's fully furnished. I don't mind what you do with it so long as you don't sell it. You must keep it always. There's nothing much I can do for you, but I can do this. The place is yours. I've quite made up my mind."

"It's preposterous," she insisted. "Suppose Nina found out—"

He repeated, "I've made up my mind."

Sunday was gloriously fine. They left London and went out to walk in Richmond Park. "I've never been here before," she told him. "I shan't come again until I can come with you."

Edward put his arm across Celia's shoulders. "Come if you like," he said, "but alone."

Then they walked under the pale autumn sky among the tattered bracken and other lovers drew away from their glances.

"Where will they all go," Edward wondered, "if they leave the park as they say they may?"

They had brought a picnic lunch and unpacked it in a sheltered hollow out of sight of the neat dissecting roads, out of sight of all. The sun shone with its last intensity, there was no recollection of war. Robins sang. They lay together in the bracken like all the other lovers and stared into one another's eyes, seeking either justification or assurance.

"I shan't forget," Edward said. "I shall never forget."

She had never been happier than at this moment.

In the early evening she caught her train back to Rougemont.

The following day, a Monday blander than any other Monday, Madame Audemars said to Celia—

"Your sister, Lady Funchawe, telephoned yesterday. I was on duty, so I took the call. I explained that you were away. She will ring you this evening."

Every vestige of color left Celia's face.

"Oh—thank you—thank you for taking the message," she said faintly.

"She seemed surprised that you were not here to speak to her."

Celia gave a forced laugh. "Elaine never expects me to budge outside the place from the beginning of term till the end."

"It was stupid of me," she said, "but I quite thought you were staying with your sister for the weekend."

Mirette began to fold her sewing. "If I had realised you were going to be in London I would have asked you to match me some embroidery silk."

"I'm sorry," Celia said shortly. "I'll be sure to tell you where I'm going next time."

Although she and Mirette Audemars had frequently crossed words, Celia was aware that to speak sharply to her now was a tactical error. As she went downstairs to the dining-room she felt cold and frightened.

That evening Elaine rang up again. "What have you been up to?" Elaine demanded. "I rang you at the weekend and they told me you were away." She sounded incredulous.

"So I was. I told them here I was staying with you." She lowered her voice. "They're all so nosy."

"Ecs, but where were you really?" Elaine insisted, inquisitive.

"I was—I was visiting some friends I made in Italy."

"Oh—the people who brought you home? Who are they?"

"Wasn't it a glorious weekend?" Celia said quickly, ignoring the second part of the question.

Elaine seemed content. "I just wanted to tell you that James may be shifted any time now. If it should happen

before Christmas you'll understand, won't you?"

"Of course."

"You know what they are—he may be here for months more. Anyway, you'll come unless we've had to move."

"Yes, indeed I will. I'm looking forward to it."

"I dare say it's quite an unnecessary warning," Elaine said.

She went on chattering until the three-minute signal had gone four times.

When Celia went back into the common-room no one looked up but Madame Audemars. This startled her into making explanations—that it was her sister calling, that she was invited for Christmas, that Elaine's house in Hampstead was pure Queen Anne, and the garden was terraced. And so on. Her nervousness made her gabble and her voice was loud. One of two of the others, trying to work or read, looked up in protest. Then Celia fell silent. She looked at Mirette with dread, terrified of what she might read in the face of her enemy.

Suddenly her head was aching so much that she had to put up both her hands and grip it hard. It was a sharp, neuralgic pain, fit accompaniment to her jangled nerves. But it gave her the excuse she needed. She got up and went to the door.

"I have a headache," she excused herself weakly.

Nobody made any reply. Mirette had returned to her sewing and she did not look up.

Celia went to her room and lay down on the bed. She closed her eyes and gradually the ache eased and with it the nausea it induced. She had a hot bath and then got into bed. She took up a book and began to read, but she could not concentrate. She lay and thought about Edward. There is nothing for me here now you are gone. My loneliness, she thought. My dreadful loneliness. Self-pity filled her eyes with tears.

She turned impatiently on her pillow, switched off the light, and tried to sleep. But it was impossible. Edward possessed her thoughts. But not Edward alone—Edward and Mirette.

NEXT day she sat down to write a proper letter to Edward. Madame Audemars and May Evans were in the room. May was writing, too.

"How romantic it is," the Frenchwoman sighed. "Ah, how moving—how tenderly sentimental. You, May, are writing to your fiance, and Celia—why, I believe Celia is writing to the count!"

Everyone turned and looked at Celia.

"Did you really meet a count in Italy?" Beryl Strutt asked, goggle-eyed.

Miss Clancy was in the room.

"Don't let them tease you, my dear," she said.

Celia knew that she should have laughed with the rest and made some flippant reply to Mirette's teasing. But it was impossible. She found herself once again taken with a violent trembling. She could hardly control her hands. She gritted her teeth hard together and grasped her pen so tightly that it cracked ominously.

This was only one incident of many. The rest of the staff, accustomed to conflict between Celia and Mirette Audemars, were unaware of a heightened tension. But it was as though a tight jangling wire bound them and a word or movement from either evoked a torrent of abominable discords.

It was now several weeks since Edward had left England, and she had had no news of him. She was filled

with a sensation of the utmost despair. It was not that she supposed he had forgotten her, that she feared he might be distracted, that he had no time for her in fact, but the realization that if something happened to him she might never know.

If he were dying, if he were dead, there would be no one to let her know, because she had no standing. They would write to his wife. At this point she could tell herself she was paying for what she had done to Nina and David.

Because of Mirette, because of the certainty of the Frenchwoman's knowledge, because of an increasing contempt in her manner, Celia felt as though Edward were already dead, and no one remained but a shabby seducer who had taken his advantage and then made off. Perhaps he had not gone abroad at all, but had merely invented the tale to get rid of her. He had promised to cable, and nothing had come—nothing.

One day Celia was sharpening a pencil in the common-room when the knife slipped and she cut her finger deeply. She had never liked the sight of blood. She was hardly aware of feeling faint before she came to and found the matron holding a glass of water to her lips. Almost immediately, she saw Mirette Audemars looking down at her.

It was as though they were alone in the room. The expression on Mirette's face was one Celia had never seen before, one she would never forget. Satisfaction, contempt, envy—all were compounded. The challenge was so obvious that Celia tried to leap to her feet and fling it back in her enemy's face. The movement upset half the glass of water.

"Sit still for a minute, dear," matron said. "I'll dress that finger in a jiffy. No—don't look at it."

"Tell Madame Audemars..." Celia began.

Then she pulled herself together, shivering. She turned her shoulder on the Frenchwoman and concentrated on the matron. For what in heaven's name had Mirette been suggesting? What? She looked quickly at matron and found nothing to alarm her.

"Your right hand, too—how annoying for you." She laughed—a good old professional set-you-at-your-ease laugh. "You won't be able to correct your exercises! That'll be popular!"

"Be quick with it," Celia said, rather sharply. "I'm late for my class as it is."

At Elaine's house on the edge of the Heath the war seemed far removed. Elaine had been waiting on the platform when Celia's train came in a couple of days before Christmas.

"What a relief!" Elaine cried. "I was so afraid it might all fall through." She looked critically at her sister. "You look a bit of a mess. Tired, too. I shall set James on you. Has it been such a wearing term?"

"Exhausting!"

"You'll soon pick up. Breakfast in bed and nice lazy afternoons. That'd cure anyone."

"You're a pet to be bothered with me. I do feel a bit down. But I'll be better by tomorrow."

As they walked across the station to the waiting car, Elaine put her arm through Celia's and pressed it hard.

"Although you're my sister I've always liked you. James likes you too."

All the strain and depression fell away from Celia. She leaned back in her corner of the car, relaxed for the first time for weeks. She forgot about the war, she forgot about Edward's long silence and about all her other troubles. She forgot everything but the com-

fort of the moment, the holiday ahead with people she loved and trusted in surroundings she could enjoy.

After three days Celia was still successfully keeping her worries at bay. She shut herself off deliberately from the past months and threw herself into the preparations for Christmas. Elaine believed in doing things in style. There would be a Christmas Day party and she was trimming a tree for the occasion. Kneeling on the floor with the tree on a dust-sheet and handling those thin glass decorations which ring with a minute music unlike any other in the world, Celia remembered Christmases at home.

"Can you remember the feel of your stockings in the dark, Elaine?" Hard and slippery, with the wool stretched over tissue-paper parcels. And the orange in the toe. Nothing can ever be like it again. She knelt there, concentrating on her job, her back to her sister.

"And the carol-singing on Christmas Eve—in spite of the Vicar being so awful. I never seem to hear any carols now, except on the wireless."

Elaine said in a sharp, cold voice, "Shut up, can't you?"

Celia turned in surprise. She saw Elaine's face dark with pain, her eyes brimming. "Darling—darling, what is it?"

"If you can't guess—"

Celia had become so accustomed to Elaine's childlessness that she was no longer aware of it. But suddenly she saw why the Christmas preparations had seemed a little fevered. "I'm sorry," she said.

"Let's talk about something else."

For a moment Celia hung on the brink of confidence. Then James came into the room.

It never failed to astonish Celia that James Panshawe as he was today had emerged from the raw youth Elaine had run away to marry. Now James was forty-two, years old, spruce and successful and crackling with energy, unspoilt and humorous. He and Elaine had everything they wanted but a family, but their devotion to one another was unchanged and must, Celia had always supposed, compensate them for any other lack.

James had agreed with his wife that Celia looked thin and wan and had set himself to put this matter to rights. She protested that there was nothing wrong with her, that she was tired and nervy at the end of a trying term—no more. She refused to consult James professionally, however much Elaine urged her. Sighing amiably at her obstinacy he wrote out a prescription and handed it to her at breakfast.

"I've made it particularly revolting. Let that be a lesson to you."

Celia took the sheet of paper in her hand. She looked down at the scribbled hieroglyphs and suddenly her eyes filled and the writing blurred and swam. She covered her face with her hands and sat at the breakfast table struggling with sobbing. Aware of their astonished silence, she groped her way from the table and went upstairs to her room. She wandered about the room, wringing her hands and sobbing. After a moment Elaine came in.

"You must tell me, darling. Is it—are you in love or something? Have you fallen in love, Celia?"

"It's over. He's gone."

"What happened? You must tell me."

"He's gone. He's supposed to be in Cairo. In October—he sailed in October."

"And you haven't heard from him? Is that it?"

"No. No—it's finished. He went in October and I haven't heard. I haven't heard." She turned to Elaine and spoke in a hard, strange voice.

"I've been trying to tell you this for days. I've been trying to tell myself for that matter."

"Darling Celia—the mails are so terribly delayed. It's silly to give up yet. Of course you'll hear. Who is he? Oh is that who you met in Italy? Is that who—I mean, that weekend—"

Celia said in her cold unfamiliar voice, "That's who it is, yes. Yes—that weekend. Elaine, I want you to understand it all—"

"Oh, darling, I do understand—I do! Don't think for a moment I blame you."

"Will you listen to me!" Celia cried, her voice rising. "It's just like a novel—etc. . . I'm going to have a baby."

"You're what?"

"Poor but not honest," she said. "Yes—I don't think there's any doubt about it now."

She looked at her sister for the first time. For a moment she thought Elaine was going to strike her.

"I'm sorry. Oh, Elaine—I'm sorry."

"Sorry!" Elaine seemed barely able to contain herself. "You—you or all people!" She put her hands to her head and walked up and down the room.

Celia's tears had dried. She felt they were her last; that now, now that the thing was put into words, she would have no time for tears again. She shivered, haunted by the beastly face of Mirette Audemars. She thought of Edward, she struggled after the warmth and tenderness of their brief time together, but it evaded her. It was dead, her feeling was dead and nothing remained but herself and the prospect that faced her. The whole thing was so unreal she could hardly grasp that it had happened to her. As for the child itself, she could arouse no emotion about that. It was nothing but a burden forced on her by a tardy love affair she had been too inexperienced to handle.

Elaine suddenly stopped her pacing. She sat beside Celia on the bed, put her arm around her, and kissed her.

"Forgive me. I didn't mean any of that. We'll look after you, darling. James and I. Don't worry. And you'll let me take the baby, won't you?"

Her voice was soft and wheedling, almost cunning.

"Celia—it's what I've never been able to have. What I ache for—oh, what I ache for! Please, please, darling Celia, don't be so cruel to me. I'll do anything—anything for you—you know that. Only let me have this baby and I'll bless you all the days of my life. Oh, you know I mean it!" Then she took away her arm and said in a flat, remembering voice, "Or will you marry him?"

Celia threw back her head and laughed shrilly. It was not the suggestion that she might marry Edward Meers that made her laugh, but the dread in her sister's voice that this might be possible.

"He's got a wife already," she said, still laughing. "Yes, you are at liberty to look forever. I don't think of him again—ever. Mother was right about men."

"No, Celia! You're distressed, you're not well. You don't mean what you say. For you of all people—it must have been strong and real—it must."

"Oh, you're a sentimentalist," Celia cried, her lip curling. "As for me—I was a fool. I should have known better than to be taken in by a married man."

"I don't believe it was like that."

Elaine jumped up, busy, quick to seize an advantage, to consolidate her position.

"Stay there. I'm going to talk to James."

Celia lay down obediently, pulling the eiderdown over her. She lay on her back and stared at the ceiling. The room would make a pleasant nursery, she decided calmly. No doubt she would come here and watch Elaine with a child that was not hers but which soon would seem so. Yes—she would do that much for Elaine.

After half an hour or so, James came into the room and sat down on the edge of the bed. He put his hand on her wrist. He looked at her so steadily that she turned away.

"Don't!" she said. "Don't! Please, James!"

"I never get used to women who want to be rid of their children," James said. "I suppose that's because we've none in this house."

"I expect so."

"It could be the making of you, Celia. You don't live in a real world at all."

"Don't! Don't! Don't!"

"Oh, I'm sure you think you've lived hugely because you've had a lover. But it's not enough. Have the child and keep it and you'll know what I mean."

"It's impossible."

"I'll help you, I promise—and you a decent job or something. I tell you I'll be all right—and you'll live to thank me."

"Elaine wants it. Let her have it."

"Good God, woman, you wouldn't be the only one bringing up an illegitimate child. Go into the country—pretend you're a war widow. If you must. But keep the child, Celia, keep it and I swear you'll never regret it."

"No," she said.

"Think about it—wait a day or two before you decide."

"I have decided. Elaine shall have it. That's what she wants, isn't it? And you wouldn't deny her, I suppose? Then I shall be free again and everything will be just as it was. I shall forget about it all."

"You think you'll forget, but you're wrong."

"It doesn't show, does it—that you've had a baby?"

"It shows if you've made a wrong decision," James answered. "It shows in your face. When you look in the mirror you'll see it there."

"Perhaps it'll kill me. I'm not as young as all that. Perhaps it would be better if I died."

"You'd rather die, wouldn't you," he said coldly, "than accept your own child?" He rose, turning his back on her. "You fool, Celia."

"Please go," she said. "Please—please go away!"

She remembered driving from Cortina, sitting in the back of the car with David and how he had leant against her, humming himself to sleep. She heard James go out, closing the door sharply behind him. Now indeed she might have wept, but although her eyes were hot and burning there were no tears left to cool them. She longed to fall back on her thoughts of Edward, but the thoughts were spoiled. Between the eyes of her imagination and his remembered face there hung another, the mouth turned down in contempt.

Next morning, there was a letter on her breakfast tray, forwarded from Rougemont. Elaine had carried in the tray, solicitous and affectionate.

"Put this in the fire," Celia said, handing her the letter.

Elaine turned the letter in her hand, doubtful.

"Are you sure? Hadn't you better read it?"

"Take it away, for God's sake!" Celia cried.

Celia found herself smiling later in the day when Elaine began talking to her. Elaine had surely been awake all night making plans, they were so neatly arranged.

The first thing, obviously, was to break the news to Mary Davenport,

and this was a task from which Celia understandably shrank. A few days later, in the first week of the New Year, Mary telephoned to say that she was in London and suggested that Celia might care to lunch with her.

Mary was waiting for Celia in the restaurant of a large store. The place was packed, but they were lucky and got a table to themselves.

Celia sat crumpling her bread and trying to find words.

"You don't look well," Mary said critically. "Late nights? Do try to get yourself really well before term starts."

"I want you to accept my notice," Celia said gabbling. "I don't want to come back to Rougemont next term. Something's happened. I can't come back. Please forgive me, but it's impossible."

Mary Davenport said nothing for a moment or two. "You'd better explain, Celia," she said.

She listened in silence as Celia stumbled through her tale. The older woman's face was expressionless, it was impossible to know what she was thinking.

"And is this what Madame Audemars found out?" she asked at last.

"She guessed something. I—I don't know how much."

"I see."

Mary was silent again. Her silence baffled and alarmed Celia, but she dared not break it.

"I think it unlikely that Madame Audemars will return next term," she said. "Things are too difficult now we are at war—mines and so on. When will this—this—when is the baby due?"

"In July," Celia said. She shivered slightly, for each time the child was spoken of by another tongue it gained in reality and inevitability.

"Then I suggest, my dear, that everyone at Rougemont shall be told that you've taken on some war work. If you'd like to return next autumn for the beginning of the school year you'll still be welcome. We can say the job was too much for your health. Will your sister support you meantime?"

"I think so," Celia said. "Will you really have me back? That's so generous, Mary."

"It's common sense. You're good at your job."

This was Celia's first experience of the ready acceptance of disaster by honest friends. She tried to say thank you, but this was not easy. In spite of her kindness, Mary could hardly be said to give her approval. She was, in fact, deeply shocked, but she had the generosity not to let this influence her behaviour.

About a week later Celia received a letter with a U.S. stamp. She realised before she opened it that it was from Nina Meers. The letter had gone first to Rougemont, and with this delay and the fact that it had had to struggle across the Atlantic, it was full of stale news by the time Celia received it. But it was an answer to one of her queries. Nina wrote that Edward had died of typhoid fever in the military hospital at Cairo on December 21.

Celia read this sentence through three or four times, then she finished the rest of the letter. Nina was asking her a favor. Would Celia make arrangements for the furniture in the London house to be safely stored?

"I have written to my solicitor about disposing of the lease," Nina wrote, "but I would rather know that somebody is on the spot to see the furniture out. I am remaining here for the time being with my mother and his family." There was a P.S.: "David sends his love. He now speaks American."

The request was obviously ridiculous; Nina must have a score of intimate friends who would look after the furni-

ture for her. Was she making this excuse to write, knowing that Celia and Edward had loved one another? Or had she rather contrived a punishment?

On a raw January day, Celia stood in the house she had so often dreamt about and watched the removal of everything that gave it meaning. Then she walked through the rooms as they were stripped, longing to let herself go in bitter regret and sadness, in despair for her love, for Edward, for herself. Her face was expressionless as she moved about the house, the men asking her questions about one piece of furniture or another.

"There's this desk, miss, oughter be locked. You wouldn't have the key?"

"Perhaps it's inside," Celia said.

The desk was a delicate thing which must have been Nina's. She opened the flap and there fell forward a pile of old photographs. She put out her hand to turn them back into position, the key already revealed by their movement. The top picture, in a reddish tint on a nebulous background, was of a small boy with dark, smooth hair wearing a sailor blouse. She picked it up and looked at it more closely. She saw the strong hint of David in the face, which was at once shy and inquiring. She turned the thing over. "19th March, 1902. Aged 3 years." She supposed it must be his mother's writing, now faded to a spiritless grey.

For the first time there rose in her hotly an emotion which she dared not name. She turned from it in horror. She slammed the desk and locked it, putting the key with the rest that she was to send to Nina. She had the photograph of Edward still in her hand. She hesitated, ready to tear it in two. But she found this impossible. She slipped the photograph into her handbag. . . .

IT was about three weeks after this that Celia received a letter from a firm of London solicitors, asking her to call. She knew before she sat down in the chair offered to her and looked across the wide, impressive desk that she would be told about the cottage. Edward had by no means defaulted. The title deeds were made over to her, and the matter was underlined by a clause in his will.

"The deeds were already in process of being made over, Miss Scarfe, when our client died. The business is now concluded, except for a couple of signatures from you. I'll just ring for my clerk to act as witness."

Celia left the office feeling strangely depleted. The grief for Edward which she had so sternly denied threatened her again. But she clenched her teeth and would have none of it. She realised that the clause in Edward's will would have told Nina everything, and she was grateful, then, for her letter.

Just for a moment, a woman of property, she saw Elaine's future happiness hanging in the balance. But, of course, that was absurd. Even with a cottage of her own she must still earn enough to maintain it and herself and one other.

Realising what she was contemplating, Celia shook herself back to reality. Her bus came round the corner, and she climbed to the top deck and sat staring moodily out of the window.

When she got home, Celia told Elaine about the cottage, perhaps expecting some sudden self-sacrifice. But Elaine immediately began planning how the place should be let furnished at least for the duration of the war. It was let already, the solicitor had said, and

the tenants would be willing to stay on. Watching her sister's eager face, so intense and lively these last weeks since she had learnt about the child, Celia realised that even if her own heart melted, if she should be fool enough to let it melt, she could never disappoint Elaine now.

In the evenings Celia sat by the fire with a book; but Elaine feverishly knitted skeins and skeins of white wool.

Along the three miles of shore, the sea even on calm days picked up a great unbroken wave, rolled it five hundred yards, and flung it on the fine shingle. In the calm, sunny days of summer the gulls sat quietly upon the water. In wild weather they tore the clouds to ribbons, they shrieked and swooped above the harbor and the town.

From Mrs. Rosewarne's cottage in Port Poirhu, one of the odd Victorian row that perched above the harbor, Celia could watch the gulls and the boats and imagine what the life of the place had been until the war came to cramp it.

Mrs. Rosewarne, a rather stern Cornishwoman, had been James Fanshawe's nurse in childhood. She had readily agreed to look after Celia for six months, asking no questions, since any request of James' was to be treated as a sacred command. If she had any idea that Celia was Elaine's sister, she gave no sign. She addressed Celia firmly as Mrs. Scarfe, looked after her very thoroughly, and did her best to make her comfortable.

But she greatly disapproved of the young woman's lack of interest in the baby. Celia read and read, stared at the sea and dreamed hopelessly. She pleased Mrs. Rosewarne when she could by smiling at her horde of tales about James as a child, though she was well aware that they were designed to whip up her enthusiasm about her own child.

What troubled Celia now was not the predicament in which she found herself, but the fact that Elaine had so willingly helped her out of it. Elaine wrote every other day. She had moved from Hampstead into Surrey, where James had been sent to a hospital appointment, and had managed to acquire a house which greatly pleased her. She described it in detail, covering pages and pages with her swift, enthusiastic handwriting. She said she thought it would be unwise to keep a child in London now—things couldn't go on so quietly for an indefinite time.

Celia sometimes thought Elaine cheated herself that it was she who carried the child, and she wondered ironically if her sister would feel any pain when it was born. In her present state of mind Celia looked forward morbidly to the birth, because she hoped it would kill her. She told Mrs. Rosewarne she hoped to die. The woman pursed her lips, chided and rallied, but her disapproval was so intense it was bound to find expression.

"You should be ashamed of yourself—to leave the poor mite alone in the world—is that what you want, my dear? What a wicked wish that is. Don't you fear to be punished for it?"

Celia, too, cast away discretion. "I've been punished," she said harshly. "Didn't they tell you they're going to take the baby? Lady Fanshawe's so excited."

"I can only have been at your own request," the woman replied. She sounded unrelenting, but there was a slightly doubtful look in her eye. "Her ladyship's not one to hurt a fly, nor Sir James, neither, as you must very

well know. Aren't they taking good care of you?"

"Of course they are!" Celia cried, laughing and unreasonable. "I'm valuable, aren't I?"

Mrs. Rosewarne made no reply to this, and her silence was accepted by Celia as a rebuke. She turned away and went to the window. It was a dull, wet day, the slate roofs gleamed in the steely light, and the one or two holiday-makers walked miserably about in mackintoshes. Celia pressed her forehead against the window-pane steamed it with her breath, and drew with her finger in the misted patch. She drew a circle and filled it with three dots, then she put a curl on top.

"Look," she said reluctantly.

Mrs. Rosewarne came to her side and stared at the absurd little face.

"I don't know what to make of you, my dear," she said at last. "If I speak harsh at times it's your own fault and that's sure. Maybe you don't deserve it after all."

"Oh, yes," Celia said, wiping out the face with the back of her hand, "I deserve it all right."

Then she blew on the glass again and wrote Edward with a fine, flourishing E.

"Is that to be his name, then?" Mrs. Rosewarne asked.

"No. It's his father's name."

When she had spoken she stood quite still staring at the name which gradually faded as the mist dried. Somehow she had never spoken of Edward like that before, even to herself. She had thought of him as a dead man, as her lover, as Nina's husband, David's father—as one she had inspired and with whose memory she could never again be easy. Now with the slow emergence of personality in the still-hidden child he began to assume this new and unfamiliar role.

"Anyway—he's dead," she added. "I'm so sorry—I'm afraid you'll have to clean the window."

She was surprised to find Mrs. Rosewarne's arm at her waist.

"Ah, life's too cruel—too cruel, my poor dear."

The unexpected warmth in her tone, the final breaking down of her stern reserve, disarmed Celia. She turned her face and for a moment rested her cheek against Mrs. Rosewarne's.

"I gave up the habit of crying some months ago, or I'd cry for you now," she said. "It really is only a habit, you know. Comfortable, but fruitless. Oh, don't be sorry for me, Mrs. Rosewarne, I've made my bed. It's just that I find it full of lumps and crumbs."

"There now, my dear, take it easy—take it easy. There's nothing so bad but it can't be got over within time."

"She wants it to be a boy," Celia said. "I hope I shan't disappoint her."

After this she moved away almost irritably. She left the room, and pulling on her mackintosh she went out and walked in the rain. The day was out of all proportion to the time of the year. The wind snatched at her hair, she leant on the harbor wall and there was salt on her lips.

She was panting slightly as she came heavily up the hill. On the corner she stopped, holding on to the wall and waiting for that impatient pummeling to cease. It seemed to her that the child beat with his fists in anger at what she would do with him. And she had no defence, no excuse to offer but her own mistaken cowardice, the curious, the binding circumstances of Elaine. Sometimes she thought she would run away before the child was born, somewhere out of reach where they would never be discovered. But

most often she dared not even admit that she had acted unwisely, that James had been right, that this could have been the beginning of a new life; and that now it was too late.

When she got in, Celia sat down in the arm-chair by the fire and lay relaxed, glad of the warmth and the glow, for there was neither in her heart. Then Mrs. Rosewarne came in with tea on a tray.

"Date gingerbread," Mrs. Rosewarne said in a new, soft voice, a voice she must have used to James in the nursery on days when he had a cold and must be tempted to eat. "I used that treacle my son sent me from Australia. There now—doesn't it look fine? Doesn't it call for cutting?"

"It's lovely," Celia said. She smiled. "You're very kind to us, Mrs. Rosewarne."

"Not long now," the woman said. "Soon be all over and finished and done with my dear."

"Very soon," Celia agreed. But she knew in her heart it was only just beginning.

AT half-term, in the second autumn of the war, Celia left Rougemont for the day and went to look at the cottage Edward had left her. As she sat in the almost empty train, Celia wondered if she was doing the right thing. She had not seen the cottage, for she had been preoccupied, and the tenants Nina had found before she went to America were still in possession, though their tenancy expired at Christmas. She had heard from the agent who handled the business that the Lorimers were complaining about a leaking pipe, and on impulse she had decided to go down and have a look for herself.

She had often thought she would sell the cottage, telling herself that she wanted nothing that bound her to Edward—all that was over, it belonged to another life and must be forgotten. And yet she found herself on her way to West Winchel with the necessary permit to enter a banned area. Perhaps it was just that she welcomed the opportunity of even a day's escape from Rougemont.

For now the place confined her so terribly she wondered how she would endure to remain there. Her gratitude and obligation to Mary Davenport seemed to tie her indefinitely. She dared not think how long it must take to discharge such a debt.

When she returned to Rougemont in September, when the war was just over a year old, Celia had found the way prepared by the Headmistress. Miss Scarfe's recent war work had been too much for her. It had occasioned a breakdown and no one was to speak of it to her. Thus she had no need to hide her listless and weary air, and her shortness of temper was indulgently excused. There was no Mirette, no one with any suspicion of the truth.

It was a little over an hour's run from Victoria to Clipping Cross, which was the station for West Winchel. Celia had only once or twice been to this part of the country. She knew that the cottage lay under the downs. Her heart and her imagination stirred in her, she was astonished by her own sudden excitement.

When she reached the Cross it was just after one. She produced her pass and her identity card and walked out into the station hall with a feeling of faint self-satisfaction. She went up into the town to find herself some lunch. In the dark dining-room of the Golden Goose she looked around her and tried to gain some impression of the atmosphere.

In the bar across the hall there was a buzz of talk and laughter from Servicemen and the usual collection of midday drinkers.

Celia sat at a table with an old man and a young boy. The old man talked incessantly giving the boy no time for more than yes or no. Once he glanced at Celia and grinned in order to rescue him she plunged into a brief halt in the conversation and asked the way to West Winchel.

"You must take a bus and walk two miles, madam, the old man replied a trifle belligerently.

"Or she could hire a car from Ian's place," the boy suggested.

"I'll walk," Celia said. "This is my first visit I should like to have a look around."

"You'll find nothing but swarmin' military," the old man assured her. "I have been turned out of my home, madam—turned out of my home. Extraneous of war and all that, but I'm told I shan't recognise the place—if I live to see it again."

"You live at West Winchel then?"

"At Priory Lodge. Or did," he snorted. "Henson is the name, Brigadier. Retired, unfortunately." He jerked his head at the boy. "Only grandson."

Celia explained that she was looking for a cottage called Four The Street.

"Are the Lorimers friends of yours?" the old man asked.

For the first time, Celia acknowledged the cottage as her own.

"They're my tenants. The cottage is mine now."

"Oh? Meers given it up?"

She had somehow, stupidly, not bargained for hearing the name. She said that Mrs. Meers was in America.

"And the husband? Nice chap," he turned to the boy. "Remember him, Barney? Taught you to fly a kite."

"He died," she said.

She listened to the flat, sad statement falling, falling on the sudden quiet of the luncheon table.

"Too bad. Don't think anything of the Lorimers. Suburban. I should have 'em out, if I was you. Take me as a tenant instead. I've got nowhere to lay me head, have I, Barney?"

"Haven't you, sir?"

"Don't count the bed upstairs, do you, boy?" He looked fiercely at Celia. "This young feller's out from school—half-term. Father's in Libya, mother's runnin' around with an ambulance in London. Poor lad has to put up with old Brig to amuse him."

"He doesn't look as though he minds much," Celia said.

The boy said, grinning. "He gives me all his sweet ration."

Celia left these two with reluctance. As she said good-bye and rose to leave the dining-room, the old man invited her to come back and have a tea with them. She accepted with delight. When she stepped out again into the High Street she was no longer entirely a stranger, an unwanted foreigner.

When she was sitting in the bus Celia's nervousness increased, and any pleasure she had had in her encounter with the two at lunch was swept away. She felt hot and faintly sick. She felt as she had done when she sat in the train on her way to meet Edward in London. She seemed to be bent now towards just such a rendezvous, not settling out to inspect a property fortuitously hers.

It was a long walk from the main road where the bus stopped to the village. From the top of the first hill she saw the village huddled below her, burrowing against the hem of the downs. Her heart beat fast and heavy. She walked slowly spinning out the time. She began to think of Edward, her imagination slipped back to him

as she had forbidden it for so many long months. All the enforced coldness, the strain, the bitterness were warmed out of her as she walked down the hill towards the village, with the pale clear sunlight streaking across her face. Although she dawdled down the hill, her mind, her memory, was making twice the pace; her thoughts were racing back and back to Edward, to her love.

The quick tumbling memories opened like a pack of cards spun from the hand of a conjurer. She thought about Elaine. She remembered everything and for the first time accepted the pain of memory. Mrs. Rosewarne had said, leaning over the bed, her hand on Celia's brow, "It's best this way, my dear. It's best." So reasonable. If she had not read that first letter of Elaine's she might never have known it was a son she had given away. She had thought she would never get Mrs. Rosewarne's voice out of her head. So she had sealed up every crack in the shuttered room that was her mind. Now as the light came through the opening shutters and the clean wind of acceptance and humility blew away the crumbling seals, it seemed to her that she opened her eyes again and breathed once more the air of common human existence.

She was aware of the very ordinary pattern of her life, whose threads had knotted and must now be teased back into decent order. Without reason and without question, as she entered the village and advanced towards her inheritance she took up the burden of her own folly, and if she found it heavier than lead, at least she knew herself ready now to carry it. She went firmly into the village and looked for the cottage.

It stood on a corner, saluting the downs on two sides. The front door was open and she could see into the hall and out again through a farther door to the garden. The cottage was old, thick-walled. The garden was wild now at the end of the year, with chrysanthemums falling wetly across the paths, some blackening dahlias and an aster or two. But on the wall there were still a few roses, and the beech hedge was bright as rust.

Celia hesitated a moment at the gate. She half expected to see Edward come from the house to meet her and resolve all difficulties between them. She made no picture of Nina or of David, but kept the place for him alone and for herself. She remembered how nearly she had sold the house, anxious to be rid of the tie with the past. Now she began swiftly to reckon how soon she might make her home here.

She walked past the cottage and went farther up the village. At the far end, the manor house, low and white, stared at a sweep of lawn and a railed paddock which had been given over to vegetables. She saw that the windows were uncurtained, the front door stood blindly open; the drive was lined with army lorries. On the other side of the road a small square house. A soldier was propped against the door of the house, reading a letter. A couple more swung out of the drive as Celia passed. They looked sideways at her, grinned, started to whistle discreetly, then changed their minds and went severely on their way.

Celia wondered why they had changed their minds—because she looked like a lady, or because a closer look had discovered her to be not worth the trouble? Against her will she smiled. She went on a little way up the lane and came to a gate she could lean on to think, to assess the curious deep excitement which was run-

ning swift and hot through her whole being.

She had not for one moment expected to be so unreasonably affected by the place. Was it because the thought of Edward was suddenly and inexplicably cleansed in her mind? Or was it, more prosaically, because for the first time she contemplated the possession of a roof of her own? Or because, accepting all things as at last she had done, she was shaken to the depths to realise that in this lovely place she must live alone?

There was no answer to these questions. She turned and walked slowly back to the village. When she reached the cottage she opened the gate and went up to the front door.

Mrs. Lorimer was out, her husband said.

Celia said, "You wrote to the agent about some repairs."

"Ah—you're the owner then?" the little man said. "Come in, please. Miss Scarie, isn't it?"

As she stepped for the first time over her own threshold she felt as lighthearted as though she were stepping into an enchanted territory.

CELIA could not bring herself to admit that she had not been inside the cottage before, that this was indeed her first visit to West Winchel. She followed Mr. Lorimer into the sitting-room, where she tried to listen to what he was telling her instead of gazing round the room. He complained in a flat, wearisome voice, then took her into the kitchen and showed her a patch of damp on the ceiling.

"I'll see that it's done," she assured him. "There's nothing else?" Before he could answer she hurried on—"I'm getting some new curtains made—will you let me take measurements now I'm here?"

The little man escorted her from room to room. She borrowed Mrs. Lorimer's tape-measure and made notes.

The place wore a slightly uncareful-for look. It was unlovely, not altogether clean. "Beautiful views," she said, looking out of a bedroom window.

"Yes, very nice," he agreed. "I'm a full-time warden at St. Swyndina so I don't see so much of them as I'd like."

"Have you had many raids?" she asked.

"Enough," he said darkly, professionally guarded.

Celia smiled out of the window, and she saw in her mind's eye the cottage swept and garnished with flowers, the fictitious curtains fluttering at the windows.

"Are you comfortable here?" she asked, as she buttoned her coat. "Were you thinking of renewing your lease?"

The man gave her a sharp look. "We wouldn't pay any higher rent, Miss Scarie, if that's what you're thinking. My wife's sister has a house at St. Swyndina and she's asked us often enough to join in with her. She's a widow. It'd be a convenient arrangement, specially with my work being there."

"Yes, indeed," Celia replied heartily. "It would be most convenient, Mr. Lorimer."

When she got back to Climping Cross and crossed the road from the bus stop to the Golden Goose, Celia saw Barney hanging about in the doorway. Immediately he saw her he darted across the pavement.

"Did you find it? Do you like it? Did you see Priory Lodge? What did

those Lorimers say? Brig's got his heart on living at Number Four."

"Where is he?" Celia asked, ignoring all these questions.

The old man was sitting by the fire in the great dark lounge.

"Thought we'd lost you," he said. "I've ordered tea. Poached eggs for Barney. They manage 'em here." He looked shrewdly at Celia. "Well?"

"I think they'll probably go at Christmas," she said, answering Barney too. "It's a lovely cottage."

"You'll be livin' there yourself, I dare say."

"I wish I could. No—not yet. My job, and the war—and so on. Did you mean what you said about taking the place?"

"I did," he said briefly. "There's a condition attached," she said.

"Well?"

"Will you let me keep a room for myself—and come down for weekends and sometimes in the school holidays?"

At that moment the tea arrived. The waitress set the tray on the table at Celia's side. She had a sudden picture of herself sitting there, the stranger, the foreigner, already pouring tea for two friends who looked towards her and waited for her to lift the teapot.

"It'll mean a smaller rent, of course," she said, rather hurriedly, uncertain of her ground just here.

He replied with gallantry, "It should put on pounds."

"I'll get them out," Celia said firmly. "Somehow or other I'll get rid of them at Christmas."

Presently it was time for her to catch her train. Barney and his grandfather stood on the platform and waved to her as the train moved slowly out of the dark station.

When Celia went back to Rougemont to finish the autumn term her mind was relieved of all its immediate weariness, and what remained she had accepted, if not willingly, at least honestly. She had decided to continue with her work at the school for as long as Mrs. Dayenport needed her, or for as long as the war lasted. Which ever event came sooner would be the signal for her release. She would go to the cottage then, and make a new life by some means as yet undecided.

The Lorimers left the cottage a few days before Christmas, and Celia went straight from Rougemont to West Winchel, where she proceeded to put her house in order. Her Christmas dinner she ate with the Brigadier and Barney, whose mother had been unable after all to get off duty long enough to visit him.

The new year plunged into winter. The cottage eased itself about the new owner, she seemed to hear it relaxing, the stairs comfortably creaking at night, a draught sighing in the chimney. When she went downstairs in the early morning, eager to get on with her work, the ashes in the brick hearth were still amouldering, and the fire leapt for her in a matter of seconds. Kneeling before the hearth Celia put her hand flat on the warm bricks of the big fireplace and knew this would be accepted as a caress.

As she moved about the cottage she felt herself at the core of a whole existence. Beyond her the cottage beyond the cottage the village, beyond the village the downs, beyond the downs the sea. Each led to each, and this calm and acceptable interdependence was as closely woven as a piece of cloth.

Celia had borrowed a sewing-machine and sat hour after hour stitching new curtains. She felt her heart swollen with love. She sang as she moved about the place, and caught

herself muttering endearments which seemed to be intended for the kettle or the teacups, or perhaps for the memory of Edward, which hung about the place in a manner that seemed almost shy.

Absorbed in the plain hard work of cleaning and sewing and sweeping, Celia found some escape from the bitter drag at the heart.

She had until now tossed all Elaine's letters into the fire, every one but the first unread. Now, receiving a letter forwarded from Rougemont, she hesitated, wondering if this time she might read it, longing for news yet reluctant to lose her new ease. But the moment's hesitation was soon over; the letter went the way of the rest. She wished she might save Elaine her scruples, her anxieties, feelings that must spoil for her the full delight of her changed way of life. She wanted to do this, she had tried a dozen times to write her reassurances; but she could not bring her mind near enough to the subject to write about it. Here, lapsing in by the quiet of this new place, she would try again.

I am too busy to reply to your letters, she wrote, and you, I know, have little time to write them. Don't write again until you have a letter of mine to answer. Don't write again, she added, dithering from the words she chose, unless to tell me he is dead. She tied her sister up in this condition without scruple. She knew Elaine would leave her alone now.

Next day, Brigadier Benson stumped through the snow from the bus stop to have a look at the cottage. He seemed pleased with what he found. "You haven't regretted our arrangement about my keeping a room here?" Celia asked. "If Barney's home on holiday I can always go to the pub, you know."

"Nonsense—the boy can come in with me. I'll be a fine thing, see if it isn't. It was a good day for the Brig when you came to lunch at the Golden Goose, my dear. Let me know when you're leavin'. I'll move in the next day. Miss Chitty seems to have everything in hand."

Miss Chitty was his housekeeper, a thin, small woman. She did odd sewing jobs while she was waiting for her employer's return, and lodged with her sister, Mrs. Bunce.

"And you don't think Miss Chitty will mind?" she asked. "Mind? She'll mind her own business."

When Celia left the cottage and went back to school she did so without active happiness. She regretted it, but she was prepared for it. The thought of West Winchel was a release from statelets and fetters, and she told herself that she had a home at last. She would live in the cottage alone, but this was an accepted punishment.

In the third summer, when everything was looking very dark and distant, Mary Davenport contrived to get hold of a large old house by the sea in Devonshire, and about twenty of the girls went there for the holidays. Celia went, too, aware that Barney ought to have her room at the cottage. She no longer heard from Elaine. At first this had been a great relief to her, but now she began to feel that news, and it was with difficulty that she refrained from writing to her sister, knowing that she would get an answer.

The long lazy days on the shore soothed her, but they gave her, too, a feeling of passing time, a nostalgia for things she had never really known. Towards the end of the holiday she had a letter from the brigadier, asking her

if she would not come down to see them before Barney went back to school. They would put up a camp bed for the boy, at whose insistence the letter was written; though not, the old man added gracefully, before it was time.

As it happened, Barney's mother arrived on the Sunday of that September week-end, and Celia immediately felt that she must leave. Miss Chitty, however, went to her sister's, and Mrs. Benson was able to have her room for the night.

"My father-in-law thinks the world of you," Mrs. Benson told Celia as they walked in the garden after supper on Sunday night, "and so, of course, does Barney. He and the old Brig are devoted to one another, and I'm really grateful to you for letting them both call this place their home. It's a terrible thing, you know, to let other people look after one's children." She looked at Celia and smiled. "Don't think me patronising if I say that in many ways I envy your freedom from responsibility."

"Then you are making a great mistake," Celia said.

She had not expected to hear herself say this, and it shook her so much that she felt herself trembling.

"Oh, that's easy to say!" Barney's mother cried, laughing now. "But I daresay I'm doing you an injustice. I expect you'd look after your child better than I look after mine!"

Celia was saved from replying by Barney, who leant far out of the bedroom window in his pyjamas, grabbed at the nearby branch of an apple tree, picked two apples with a quick clutching movement, and swung himself in again.

"You'll kill yourself!" his mother cried in her high, pretty voice. "Old as you are, I shan't be forced to come up and beat you."

"Don't you dare!" the boy shouted back. "Or send Miss Scarle—she's got smaller hands!"

His mother grimaced at Celia, and said that she was put in her place. She picked up Celia's hand and set her own beside it, and announced that Barney was right.

Suddenly the silly little incident seemed to squeeze itself right into Celia's heart. She turned aside, not caring how rude she appeared, and went to put away the garden chairs, flapping and slumping them to save herself from considering what Mrs. Benson was thinking of her. She made excuses and went to bed early, and had she by this time forgotten her own determinations she would have wept. This facile comfort she was denied by no one but herself.

Next morning Celia announced that she would stay another day, and she and Barney went to see his mother off at the station.

Celia went back to school and the old routine absorbed her. The days went by with a steady dullness, and the only thing that distinguished one from another, it seemed to Celia, was the news from the various fronts.

At half-terms and holidays Celia went to West Winchel and stayed briefly in the cottage, beginning to learn the neighborhood and the people who lived in it. When she arrived for week-ends at Climping Cross with her privileged pass and came from the station to sniff this keener air, she experienced such a warm recognition of her true place that she hardly knew how to express her contentment. It seemed to her that all her life had been leading to this moment of recognition and ac-

ceptance. Time and again she told herself that she could want nothing more. If the pattern was flawed, then the flaw must be accepted and overlooked. The threads could be picked up again after all. . . . Sometimes she believed in her own assurances; sometimes not.

A few weeks before the end of the autumn term, when the war was five years old, Miss Clancy came into the form-room where Celia was teaching. She hurried up to the desk and spoke in her confidential tone.

"Mrs. Davenport would like to see you in her room, Miss Scarle. Somebody to see you, my dear—a Mr. Forbes-Brown." Celia set the class an exercise, and then reluctantly followed Miss Clancy out of the room. Then quite suddenly her blood chilled. She clenched her hands in her pockets and tried to shut her mind to conjecture. She followed Miss Clancy down the stairs and across the wide hall to the door of the headmistress's study. Mary Davenport held out a hand as Celia entered, and a middle-aged man rose from his chair.

"Come in, my dear Celia," Mary Davenport said. She came from behind her desk and stood at Celia's side. "This is Mr. Forbes-Brown. He has come here to see you, very considerably, instead of writing. I'm afraid it's bad news, dear."

"Yes?" Celia said, guarded. She looked cautiously at Mr. Forbes-Brown, who now held out his hand.

"Is it Elaine?"

"It's your sister, yes."

He hesitated, and Mary Davenport broke in, taking her by the arm—"I know you have courage, Celia. Elaine has been killed."

"It was one of those dreadful rockets, Miss Scarle. The house was completely demolished. They must have been killed instantly."

"Then?"

"Sir James, too. Husband and wife. Terrible. I am your brother-in-law's solicitor—indeed, my firm has acted for the Painshawes, for many years. It seemed best that I should come to see you myself."

"That was very kind of you, Elaine, and James. . . ."

"By the mercy of God," he replied without affectation, "the little boy was away from home."

"Sit down, Celia," Mary Davenport said.

Celia sat down and put her hand over her eyes.

"Where was he, then?" she asked, with a vision of horrors seen from a little distance that might ruin a whole life.

"He was at a children's party in a neighbor's house. Quite unharmed."

Mary brought a glass of sherry and put it into Celia's hands. "A terrible shock," she said to the lawyer. "Drink this, my dear."

Celia took the glass and tried to drink, but her teeth chattered. She pulled herself together with an effort. She swallowed the sherry, though it turned thick and sour in her mouth.

"When did it happen?" she asked.

"The day before yesterday—Tuesday. I was unable to get in touch with you sooner—I couldn't find your address. Sir James had not put it in his will."

The will. . . . With these words, which seemed connected only with the unreality of plays and the affairs of other people, Celia came to herself.

"All right," she said. "I'm all right now." She smiled slightly at Mr. Forbes-Brown, whose anxious, troubled face moved her unexpectedly. "Is there anything more to tell me?"

"The funeral takes place tomorrow. You will probably like to attend?"

"No—I don't think so, I'd rather not." She insisted, "Is there anything more?"

"Yes. By your brother-in-law's will you are left a very substantial legacy—very substantial. And you are named as guardian to the little boy."

Celia rose to her feet without speaking and went to the window. She stood there staring out at the familiar gardens. Very gradually the picture blurred. It was as though the glass before her misted and she saw in the patch of steam the silly face she had drawn four years ago at Port Polihu. But it was not the glass which blurred. It was simply that her eyes had filled with the long, forbidden tears. She began to cry silently. Her hands flat on the sill, she bowed her head and the tears fell on her fingers. Yet it was not for sorrow that she wept, it was for joy. She discounted Elaine, she forgot even James who had given her back what she did not deserve to regain. She thought only that she had been granted a second chance, that, although she had been lonely and weak, afraid to recognise what had given her joy, cowed by an enemy, denying her love, she had none the less been twice acknowledged by the dead. She would go with the boy to the home his father had given them, and there would be nothing in life but contentment.

"Come, Celia," Mary said, putting an arm round her waist, "come, my dear, you must not let go like this."

Celia turned to the lawyer, trying not to smile, to laugh, trying not to betray the fact that only one thing that he told her had any importance.

"Where is he now?" she asked.

"The child? He is with his grandmother, Mrs. Fanshawe, at Richmond."

"Does she know? About this, I mean—that I am to be his guardian?"

"Yes. And I think, Miss Scarfe, if you are unwilling or unable to accept the responsibility, Mrs. Fanshawe will be more than glad to give the boy a home. You would, of course, remain his legal guardian. After all, though he is an adopted child, Mrs. Fanshawe has a considerable affection for him, so that you need not feel any doubts. . . . I believe you have not met the little chap?"

"Did she say that? Do you mean she wants to keep him?"

"Shall we say—she will part with him reluctantly, if she must part with him at all?"

"Oh, yes, she must part with him," Celia said. She gave a slight, hard laugh. "James meant me to have him, and so I shall. So I shall. He wouldn't have left me this considerable legacy you speak about, if he hadn't meant that. And, you see," she went on, with growing confidence, "I have a cottage in Sussex. We shall go there to live. What's his name?"

"Edward . . . Edmund . . . To tell you the truth I've forgotten. They had some nickname for him. But it's in the will. You'd like to see the will, I dare say."

"It doesn't matter," she said, suddenly shy and afraid.

But he was already taking the folded paper from his brief-case, putting on his spectacles, searching for the clause.

"Edmund. In the event of my wife's death my adopted son Edmund James Fanshawe to be given to the care of my wife's sister Celia Lucy Scarfe who becomes sole and absolute guardian of the child. The money clause comes earlier. Half his estate goes into trust for the boy, a quarter comes to you personally. The rest is for his mother. The estate is a substantial one. There is no reason why you should not live quite comfortably, so long as you are not extravagant."

Celia said, frowning a little, "You're sure it's Edmund, not Edward?"

"Edmund. Good Old English. And when may I tell Mrs. Fanshawe you will be coming to see her, Miss Scarfe?"

"At the weekend, Sunday. Yes—on Sunday I am quite free. Does that suit you, Mary?"

"If you have made up your mind—"

"I have."

Mrs. Davenport went to the door with the lawyer and stood at the top of the steps as he hurried to his waiting taxi. Celia watched them from the window. Celia had seen the headmistress stand there in just such an attitude a hundred times before. But never with these eyes, which seemed to view a scene played out in a world already unfamiliar. From now on she was cut off from Rougemont. Though she might return to her classroom and continue with the timetable from now until Sunday, when she went to find the boy, she was no longer a member of this community. She thought she saw James' urgent face as he sat by her bed and tried vainly to persuade her to take up her responsibilities. Dear, dear James, who had known so much better than she what was good for her.

MARY opened the door and came back into the room. She was still rubbing her hands against the cold and she went immediately to the fire and threw on a fresh log. She remained there, staring down at it, reluctant, it seemed, to turn and take up the task in hand. There was something so rigidly uncompromising about the back of her dark head that Celia began at once to remember how much she owed this woman and how the debt was not yet cancelled. She knew it never could be, now.

"Mary—Mary, you understand, don't you?"

"Oh, yes, my dear, indeed I understand. That you will leave here without proper notice and take yourself off to a life of which you know nothing. When have you ever had the care of a young child? How can you be capable of the task? Be careful, Celia. Think—think before you act. You didn't want him. He doesn't know you. He knows his grandmother."

Celia retorted sharply that Mrs. Fanshawe was not Edmund's grandmother.

"To him she appears as his grandmother. That is all that matters. He knows—he loves her—he relies on her. What are you but a stranger who will take him away from all that is left to him now? Do be sensible, Celia!"

"Don't, Mary! Stop talking like that! Oh, why must you always spoil everything? Why do you always have to be cruel in the end? It's no use. My mind's made up. Don't you know that I realised what I'd done even before I was born? They've given me a chance to put things right—for both of us. Do you really think I shall turn it down? Do you? Oh, Mary, please—please try to understand!"

Mary looked at Celia in a puzzled, slightly disgusted way.

"You've put it all behind you. Your place is here now. You owe it to me."

"It's no use," Celia said. "I can't argue about it any more. If I'm not it's my own madness. I know how much I owe you. I do indeed! I'll make it up some other way—I swear I will. But I've got to go. I've got to go."

"When do you want to leave here?" she asked in an even voice. "Will you stay till the end of term? It's only a matter of three weeks, you remember. Or are you too impatient?"

"Yes, Mary. I'm too impatient."

"Very well. You must do as you think right. I shall try to understand what seems to me madness. . . . You must tell me what I am to say to the staff."

"The truth—I shall tell them the truth."

She saw Mary's face turned towards her then, and the slightly pinched look about her mouth and nostrils warned that the little sadistic streak was coming into play.

"The truth, Celia?"

"I mean that I . . . that Elaine's been killed. . . . That I'm to be guardian to her . . . to her adopted son."

"The real truth, my dear, had better remain hidden. You've been given something today that makes you feel pleased and proud and happy. But you know in your heart that you don't deserve it."

"Sometimes people get a second chance," Celia said, a little wildly.

"I've just one piece of advice for you, my dear: see to it that he never finds out the real truth, for if he does—you won't be happy then."

Poor Mary, Celia said to herself desperately. Poor Mary, she must be so lonely. . . . This, however, was the merest bluff and she knew it; she was shaking and sick with anger and despair.

"Why must you always try to spoil things?" she said again.

Then she turned away sharply, turned her back on the headmistress and broke the spell. She said that she would never cease to be grateful, that she would never forget. . . . When she turned to look at Mary again everything was normal, so normal that she wondered for a moment if she had imagined the whole thing.

"What would I have done without you?" she said, anxious, so very anxious, that they might still be friends.

Mary smiled slightly. "Make your arrangements then, my dear," she said.

Mr. Forbes-Brown wrote by the next morning's post that he had informed Mrs. Fanshawe of Celia's wish to call on her the following Sunday. On Saturday there was a note from Mrs. Fanshawe herself, inviting Celia to lunch. The note was non-committal, written in an upright, old-fashioned handwriting that did not suggest any weakness in the writer. Between the visit of the lawyer and her departure for Richmond, Celia existed in a strange vacuum of unreality. She tried sometimes to visualise the encounter ahead of her. She tried to imagine what the child might look like, but she could get no picture of him at all. From the bottom of her writing-case she took the photograph of Edward as a small boy, and although she had not so much as looked at it since the day she took it from Nina's desk, now she pored over it, she carried it in her handbag and constantly took it out and gazed at it.

But this was a child of a forgotten time. She would not find Edward's son with such neatly brushed hair, nor yet wearing a sailor blouse with a black silk bow. And Edward here was eight years old, while Edmund was only four. A mere baby.

Celia had not been to Richmond since the day she and Edward had spent together in the park. Now as she remembered it her heart seemed to ache in her breast, she was touched with a tenderness that was physically painful. At that moment she was nearer to Edward than she had ever been, even when they were together, and the fact that the sound of his voice had faded from her memory did nothing to separate them.

Mrs. Fanshawe's house was one of a small Victorian terrace in a narrow road leading down to the river.

As she approached the house, as she opened the gate and went up the flight of clean white steps, Celia was as far removed from reality as if she were on the verge of unconsciousness. Her ears were deaf to the sound of her own footsteps.

The house was quiet as she waited after ringing the bell. What had she expected? Perhaps she had imagined that she would immediately hear the child's voice within the house. But there was nothing. Presently, without any preliminary sound of approaching footsteps, the door was opened by a small, elderly woman.

"Mrs. Fanshawe's not back from her walk," she told Celia, as she led her into a room off the hall. "Something must have delayed her. Please sit down. She'll be vexed she wasn't here."

Although the woman's words were friendly her tone was aloof and, after one searching glance, she did not look again at Celia's face. Celia was immediately filled with terror, she knew at once that Mrs. Fanshawe had done this on purpose to shake her, and the interview ahead seemed instantly full of perils.

A long door opened on to a small front balcony and three iron steps led down to a strip of garden beautifully kept. In the middle of the path a chipped red engine lay on its side at the end of a piece of string.

It was the only visible sign of a child in the house, but it was enough. Now for the first time she knew that this was no dream. Whatever the future held, she could not turn from it now.

Before she could rally herself from this certainty, the door opened behind her. She turned to face Mrs. Fanshawe, advancing with her hand outstretched.

"You must forgive me. I have only just discovered that my watch has stopped."

James' mother was a woman of nearly seventy, but her upright figure, her well-kept white hair and her lined face gave her the appearance of a woman fifteen years younger. This was not pleasing to Celia. She saw that Mrs. Fanshawe was a woman of vigor and purpose; it would not be easy to deny her what she had set her heart on.

"Will you have a glass of sherry before we go in to lunch?"

She moved to the tray on the table. When she had put a glass of sherry in Celia's hand she sat down with her hands folded in her lap, leaning slightly forward in her chair and apparently unaware that she had put her guest at any disadvantage.

"James must have had a very high opinion of you, Miss Searle."

"There was no one else—I mean, he had no sister, had he, or brother; and I am Elaine's only relation."

"He had a mother," Mrs. Fanshawe said, with dreadful gentleness.

"He knew that I was accustomed to children."

"To schoolgirls. That is rather different, isn't it? But you must let me tell you how desperately sorry I am about your poor sister."

"We are both bereft," Celia said.

"And you won't bereave me any further, will you, my dear?"

Celia had not expected so precipitate an attack.

"I don't think I know what you mean."

"Yes—oh, yes you do. I mean the boy—James' boy. I know you won't want to take him away from me."

Celia replied, coldly. "He can hardly be called James' boy, can he? An adopted child."

"He could not have been better cared for, or more lovingly. Elaine felt that he was hers."

"Please forgive me, Mrs. Fanshawe. If I seem unsympathetic, James did appoint me the boy's guardian, you know."

"Ah—so you do mean to take him away!"

"I shall make a home for him—as James and Elaine would want me to—as James meant me to." She began involuntarily to justify herself. "I have a cottage in Sussex. His home shall be there."

"You have never seen the child, I believe?"

"I—I saw him when he was a baby." She would have liked to say, "I knew him before he was born." Of course, I am quite powerless. The most I can do is appeal to your good sense. A child of four years naturally clings to those he knows. He is bewildered, as it is, that Elaine has not come to fetch him. He asks for her every day. The best one can do for him is to give him something familiar to hold on to. He has always been very happy with me. There was a slight pause, then she said, smiling slightly. "Why are we talking like this? You have barely set foot inside the house. I am a shocking hostess. You'll have another glass of sherry, I'm sure."

At this moment the elderly servant appeared to tell them that luncheon was served.

"Let us go in, then, shall we? Bring your sherry with you, my dear."

"When am I going to see the boy?" Celia asked at last, unable to contain her impatience any longer.

"Oh—not today, I am afraid. He has gone to spend the day with a little friend of his who has a birthday. He was so anxious to go."

FOR a moment Celia was so stunned with disappointment that she could find nothing whatsoever to say. She felt herself turn pale. She wished with all her heart that she might strike the controlled, ageless face of her hostess. She could have cried out with sheer, bitter frustration.

"I dare say it's just as well," Mrs. Fanshawe said. "Jessie is really too old to control him and I can get no one else, of course—so it would have been quite impossible for us to talk—as we must. And let us do so without delay. Now, my dear Miss Searle—no, I must call your darling Elaine's sister by her Christian name. Now—Celia. I do beg you to consider this matter very carefully. Have you the least idea how much is entailed by the business of looking after a young child? Of course, I realise you are his legal guardian, but I do ask you to leave him with me, at least until he is a few years older. Believe me, I know what is best for him. He is beginning to settle down here. To uproot him at this stage might be to cause irreparable harm."

The gentle, effortless voice ran on. But I am his mother, she wanted to cry. Any child is best with its mother. . . . To betray the fact that she was his mother was to betray the fact that she had sworn fit to abandon him. No one would believe how long and bitterly she had regretted it, how soon she had come to her senses, how impossible she had found it to hurt Elaine.

"When will he be home?" she asked, struggling to reassert herself.

"I suppose about half-past five."

"Then you won't mind if I stay till then?"

Mrs. Fanshawe's face seemed to shut down upon itself.

"Of course not, my dear."

There was a letter from the brigadier on the table after Celia's visit to Richmond. Priory Lodge was now in the last stages of being repaired after the Army's occupation and he hoped to get into the place in about three weeks' time.

"If you let the cottage to tenants who are not sufficiently congenial," he

wrote, "if it is impossible for you to keep your own room, please remember that Priory Lodge is far too big for one old man, and Miss Chitty shall see that one room is kept for you and no one else."

At this stage, Celia was uncertain what to do about the cottage. She had left Richmond without any final decision, confused by the skill of her adversary. It took her two days to free her mind of prejudice, and then she came to her decision. She went to the headmistress and said she would be glad to stay on until the end of the term; she wrote to Mrs. Fanshawe telling her that the cottage would be ready by Christmas and that she would come to fetch Edmund on the twenty-eighth of the month. Her letter was firm, but it was friendly.

Although Celia had remained at Richmond until Edmund was brought home from his birthday party, she had not seen him even then. He had fallen asleep in the car on the way home and he was carried straight upstairs and put to bed by Jessie.

It was strange to leave Rougemont on the last day of the term, knowing that she had said goodbye to this life after 15 long years, and without any regrets. She travelled the same day to West Winchel and found herself at last in full possession of the cottage.

In the last week of December, when Celia came from West Winchel to Richmond, there was no longer any hesitation in her approach to Mrs. Fanshawe's front door.

Jessie let Celia in and showed her straight into the drawing-room. Mrs. Fanshawe was sitting in a deep chair by the fire and the child was in her arms. His face was hidden in her neck and she was rocking him to and fro. The picture was at once charming and infinitely distressing. Celia knew that she was meant never to forget it, nor would she. When the boy turned his face at the opening of the door it was red and tear-stained.

So harsh and bitter an anger filled Celia that it took from the moment all the strangeness and emotion that she had anticipated. The child's face was absurdly familiar. She told herself she would have recognised him if she had seen him for the first time on the far side of the world. After all he was like the old photograph of Edward, only thinner, smaller, finer-drawn. Celia saw her own coloring superimposed on Edward's features and, already, as it were, lightly sketched in, the fine fly-away eyebrows which she had loved in Elaine. He was a skinny little creature, with none of the baby fat she had somehow expected. His hands were already straightening into character.

"Why look—here she is!" Mrs. Fanshawe cried. "Here comes Aunt Celia to take you away from Granny."

Celia opened her mouth to speak and then closed it again. There was no polite way of expressing her shocked anger at this cruelty to her and to the boy. She wondered how long it would take her to erase the impression created in that moment of herself as the incarnation of some stern and unknown fate, dragging him away from what he knew and trusted. She watched him hunch himself nearer to Mrs. Fanshawe. He snuggled at Celia, pulling down the corners of his mouth.

If she had not seen fear in his expression, she would have laughed at his determined resentment. She stood helplessly looking across the room at the pair and when she opened her mouth to speak she found that her voice had dried away and she was obliged to clear her throat and begin again.

"Well, Edmund," she said, using the name with difficulty. "Well, Edmund,

are you looking forward to going in a train?"

"Stand up, Edmund," Mrs. Fanshawe said, thrusting him from her lap, "and say how do you do nicely."

He held out his hand as he had been taught to do, but he did not speak. His hand was soft and attempted no pressure. It was just that she held it a moment in hers, hearing again the soothing voice of Mrs. Rosewarne, hearing the gulls screaming beyond her window.

The gulls, indeed, swooped close to the window of this charming little room in the house by the river. The sound of their crying, the astonishing flash of their wings so close to the pane provided the distraction so desperately needed.

Edmund rushed to the window, his face transformed from fear and sorrow to excitement.

"They've taken the bread!" he cried. "It's gone! Granny, the bread's gone!"

"We've put bread out every day since before Christmas, Celia," Mrs. Fanshawe explained, "and every day they come and get their dinner—don't they, Edmund?"

He was too absorbed to reply. He stood looking up as the birds crowded and hovered. And once one bird perched on the window-sill and stared in.

"He smiled!" the child cried. He turned suddenly and looked at Celia. "Any seagulls in the country?"

"Of course not, darling," Mrs. Fanshawe said.

"But yes—there are seagulls in the country," Celia contradicted. "In winter-time they come into the field next to the garden. When the farmer goes ploughing, the seagulls fly behind him, looking for worms."

"Only in the winter, dear," Mrs. Fanshawe said.

"In the summer," Celia rushed on, "the seagulls live by the sea. Well—that's why they're called seagulls, isn't it?"

Edmund corrected her patiently: "Seagulls."

"In the summer they fly over the cliffs by the sea, and they swim on the sea, they float on the waves, lots of them, bobbing up and down—like a boat in your bath."

"We don't play in the bath, do we?" Mrs. Fanshawe said, putting out a hand and smoothing his hair, drawing him back to her by the touch. "We don't want to catch cold."

The tussle between the two women was in its way so ludicrous that Celia wanted to fling back her head and break into hysterical laughter. She heard herself slipping into the inevitable babbling.

"There's a boat in my bathroom," she said.

"He catches cold very easily, Celia. You won't take any risks, will you?"

"Of course not. Thank you for warning me." In an effort to restore the situation, to maintain some sort of civilised good manners, to alleviate her own feeling of guilt, she added, "I dare say I shall always be ringing you up and asking questions about him."

"Will you stop to lunch?" Mrs. Fanshawe asked. "or must you leave at once? What time is your train?"

"I think we should be getting along quite soon," Celia replied. "What about that train, Edmund?"

He looked at Mrs. Fanshawe, then back at Celia.

"Need I come, please?"

"Don't make me go back in the train by myself!" Celia cried with ghostly brightness.

"Now you're not to be unkind to poor Auntie Celia, Edmund," Mrs. Fanshawe said.

The patronage in her tone, the

mounting tone of conviction that she, the elder, the wiser, was going to win the day, acted smartly on Celia.

"Please get his things on," she said, peremptorily. "There's really no time to waste. May I telephone for a taxi?" The older woman hesitated, unexpectedly, her eyes filled with tears, her lower lip trembling grotesquely. For the first time she looked her age. She took the boy rather sharply by the hand and led him out of the room.

For a moment Celia stood where they had left her, trying vainly to pull herself together. She saw the telephone, cream, elegant, standing on a low table by the fire. She felt that she would be unable to recover herself sufficiently to lift the receiver and call for a taxi. But a desire to escape from the house forced her on. She heard her strange, distant voice giving the unfamiliar address, asking that the taxi might come soon.

WHEN she had finished she could only walk up and down the room, quite unable to conquer her fear that even now there would be some hitch, that Mrs. Fanshawe would so contrive that the child must be carried screaming from the house.

After ten minutes the door opened and Edmund came in. He was dressed for going out, in leggings and a muffler.

"Tell me about those seagulls," he said.

"In summer we shall go to the sea and watch them on the water."

"Bobbing up and down?"

"Yes!"

"Like a boat? Like the boat at your house?"

"Yes," she said eagerly. "Yes."

Jessie stood in the doorway.

"The taxi's here, Miss. I've got the suitcase down. Madam'll send on the trunk."

Celia looked around vaguely. "Thank you. Where is Mrs. Fanshawe?"

"She asks you to excuse her, miss. She's in her room. She's said goodbye."

"I see," Celia said. She took Edmund by the hand. "Come along, then. Say good-bye to Jessie."

That was a mistake. Jessie clasped the child in her arms and called him her blessed lamb. In a nice old-fashioned way that quite unmanned him. He began to wail.

"Oh no, Edmund—no!" Celia cried, beside herself, too well aware of the woman listening in her room. "Come on, now—be a big boy. We'll miss that train. And if we miss that train, what about the boat in the bathroom?" Another moment of this and she would begin to cry herself. "Look—Jessie will come down to the taxi with us. Won't you, Jessie?"

Either she was too well schooled, or like her mistress, she had allowed the situation to overcome her common civility. Jessie pushed Edmund away from her and went weeping to the kitchen.

In the little pale hall Celia and Edmund faced one another with what was clearly the same desperation in their hearts. For a second the future of both of them hung in so delicate a balance that even a breath could have tipped the scales. But with an immense effort, Celia pulled herself together. She hung her handbag on her wrist, picked up the heavy suitcase with one hand, and caught hold of the boy with the other.

The taxi-driver came to meet her at the gate and took the suitcase from her. Edmund was still crying, with a ridiculous boo-hooing noise that pushed out his lips and made his face redder than ever. He climbed into the taxi

on all fours and planted himself on the edge of the slippery seat.

"Well, I never," remarked the taxi-driver, thrusting in the suitcase. "What a lot of noise some folk make."

"The station," Celia flung at the man crossly as she got in after the child and sat beside him. Surely the fool could see that the boy was upset—such a stupid way to talk to him. "That'll do now, Edmund," she said severely. "Just look what a lovely taxi this is. Look at the flowers—aren't they beautiful?"

They were made of paper and thick with dust, but they served their purpose. Edmund allowed himself to be distracted. He continued to sob and mumble, but his tears were checked.

Celia took out her handkerchief and made to wipe the boy's face, but this advance he rejected. He shrugged away and, when she insisted, he forgot the flowers and train ahead and began to cry again on a note of mounting misery.

Mary Davenport had been right when she said that Celia had no experience of very young children. At this moment she was irritated with Edmund more than anything else. She sat there in the taxi and told herself that this was her own child, her baby she had so wickedly denied. She tried to think about Edward and the brief days they had spent together. This was her own and Edward's son, she had yearned after him all these years and fate had given him back to her. She of all people had been given the rare second chance.

She tried to whip up her excitement, to recall her longing and delight when she learnt what James had written in his will. But nothing happened. She was tired out, exhausted by anger, and Edmund simply would not stop crying. Exasperation and sheer impotence made her wring her hands together. In vain she struggled after some sort of control. She felt her despair changing to quick anger.

"Will you be quiet!" she said sharply. He stopped crying immediately. The mumbling ceased and he sucked in his lip. He looked at her in a surprised, speculative way. Whatever it was he saw in her face, it released him on the instant. The tears began again, this time almost silently. He seemed to control his sorrow with a stern resolution, ridiculous in a creature of his size. Then indeed all emotion flowed out of her but her own love, for the first time brought to fruition.

"Dearest," she said, in a voice she did not recognise. She began to draw him towards her, ready to hold him in her arms and comfort him, as Mrs. Fanshawe had done.

But he was not to be so easily won. He pushed her away and remained perched on the edge of the seat and his tears continued.

They reached the station. She took Edmund through the barrier and got him into the train. They sat side by side, but in her hurt and baffled state of mind she was silent, too busy trying to comfort herself to make any further effort towards him. They sat there looking like the strangers they actually were. I've made a mistake, she thought wretchedly. I'll have to let him have him back. I'm beaten. But she couldn't bear to accept such a quick defeat. Not yet . . . she wouldn't give in yet.

Shortly after they had descended into the tunnel just before Earl's Court, Celia became aware of some stirring in the child at her side. She looked down at him for the first time.

The tears had dried on his cheeks and with shamelessly winsome smiles he was accepting and lavishly returning in his own way the friendly winks of an

A.T.S. corporal on the opposite seat. In the train from Victoria to Climping Cross, Edmund slept. He leant against Celia and his head lolled on her arm. Because she was so depressed, because now indeed every embarrassment she might with reason have feared had overtaken her, Celia was unable to make anything of this opportunity. She sat rigid with the child asleep at her side.

At the last stopping place before Climping Cross, Edmund woke with a start. He sat up and looked around him in a bewilderment that amplified into fear. His face looked thin and pale in the indifferent light, his eyes seemed to grow as he gazed. What faint, unlettered memories stirred in his struggling mind? It was impossible to know how much he had accepted of the disaster that had overtaken him. It wasn't always necessary to tell a child in so many words what had happened. There was another sense that spoke directly to the unformed brain.

Poor poor little wretch! Poor little animal, unable to speak for himself, pushed momentarily from one to another of a number of inexplicable adults! She suddenly remembered her own childhood, and the frustrated sensation of being at the mercy of unquestionable authority. He was too young to know this, yet surely already there was some awareness in him that the world was not right?

"Nearly home," she said, wanting now to put her arms around him but unable to do so. "Who went to sleep?" she teased and felt herself flag at the hatefully arch tone she had used.

Edmund made no reply to this. The sleepiness and the fear, however, left his face. He looked much more reasonable, as he had looked in the restaurant where they had had their lunch. He sat staring at Celia in silence, but it was not a hostile silence.

"Let me do your coat up," she said to the boy. "We're nearly there."

He stood in front of her and let her fasten the buttons and wrap his muffler round his neck. He rather scornfully corrected her when she began to do up the buttons from right to left, instead of from left to right. Then she put his gloves on, thrusting the fingers one by one into place. She looked up from the task and smiled into his solemn face. He returned the smile very faintly, unaware of the appeal which he seemed to refuse. What had she expected? she asked herselfardonically. Was he to have run into her arms, throw himself sobbing on her neck, instinct claiming her as his own?

"Will there be seagulls tomorrow?" he asked, politely harping on the one point of interest she had managed to offer him.

"I expect so. Yes, I'm sure there will."

"In the garden?"
"In the field next to the garden. The cottage is in the garden and there's a hedge all round. On the other side of the hedge is a field."

"And the seagulls are in the field?"

Edmund ran the length of the compartment twice, then hurried himself on the seat at the far end. He looked at Celia over his shoulder. He was showing off, but she smiled at him eagerly, and accepting the example of the girl before in the train from Richmond, she winked. But she failed to please. He turned away and began to play with the blind. They sat in silence as the train blundered noisily through the tunnel and drew up at the station.

It gave Celia a very odd sensation to walk up the stairs into the station hall holding Edmund by the hand.

She had come here so often alone. The ticket collector said good evening and glanced down at the child, who had asked to carry the tickets and now surrendered them with obvious satisfaction.

"Got somebody to look after you this evening, miss, I see. That's nice. Proper young gentleman you got there."

She smiled, not knowing how to reply. She asked if Lusted's car had arrived to take her home.

"Just comin' in now, miss." The great voice of the ticket collector boomed across the station. "Young lady askin' for you, Ted. Come on and give a hand with the luggage."

"Only the one suitcase," Celia said, as the man approached. "It's cold here."

"Yes—there'll likely be a black frost tonight."

They walked across the booking-hall and out into the street.

"Perhaps it will snow — Edmund would like that." She looked down at him and smiled, but he made no reply. He was busy looking round him, eyes fixed Lusted, staring at the passers-by. "He's tired after the journey," Celia said. "We've come all the way from Richmond."

"Visitor, Miss Scarfe?"

"He's coming to live with me," she said.

"You don't say? Well, that's nice. Have your hands full now, I reckon."

She wondered if he was looking at her curiously and decided not. My sister's child, she could have amplified; but she told herself she did not wish to speak of Elaine in front of the boy. How many of the villagers would think this was her child? She would probably never know.

IN the taxi Edmund sat bolt upright and stared out at the darkness. The incidence of Lusted and the ticket collector, by bringing new faces to the scene, had removed Celia's absolute strangeness. She was now the one he knew, the one he would turn to, away from these complete strangers. The small comfort warmed her quite disproportionately. She began to feel excited, her sense of authority increased.

She thought happily that the cottage would now be properly filled. Edward should have been there to greet them. Indeed his memory would be there, a ghostly memory held by the chairs in which he had sat at ease, the glasses from which he had drunk, the desk where he had written his letters. And suddenly she wondered if she wanted more. It was all so long ago, she had known him so little. Even during the past four years Edward's son had been far more real to her than Edward. If she saw him now — would they recognise one another? She had changed. She had grown up belatedly and at last she knew her mind.

It was centred on Edmund, who seemed now no part of his father but only of herself. The pain of separation most strangely remained, but no longer comprehensibly, no longer unacceptably named. It was like a little pain in the bones that twinges unexpectedly and sharply. As Celia went into the cottage with Edmund at her side she at once recoiled and accepted the place's memory of his father.

The Brigadier's housekeeper, Miss Chitty, had come to let them in. She had promised to look in and see that the fire was burning brightly, and she had stayed to welcome them.

"We thought you'd be tired after the journey, I've got your tea ready. Is that right?"

"It's lovely," Celia replied. "The loveliest thing possible. Thank you."

"And here's the little chap. Bless

him," Miss Chitty said, looking down at Edmund through her hideous steel-rimmed spectacles. "Come here, love, and let me take your coat off. You'll be ready for your tea, too, I shouldn't wonder. Well, I never, miss — he's got quite the look of you."

It came so quickly and so naturally that Celia as naturally replied, with none of the bitter consciousness she had expected.

"My sister and I were supposed to be alike," she said.

"Will he eat an egg, d'you suppose? There's one laid today — a nice brown one."

"What about it, Edmund?"

He was beginning to expand, now that he found himself in a warm room with Miss Chitty in place of old Jessie.

"A negg?" he asked.

"Would you like that?"

"Very nice indeed," he replied pompously.

He went ahead of the two women into the sitting-room. When Celia and Miss Chitty came into the room, Edmund had already found his place at the little table she had laid for him. "There, bless him!" said Miss Chitty. "He'll soon settle."

As she spoke the child looked up at them. His clear, questioning glance absorbed them both. He sat there summing them up, the pair of them, and Celia at least found it difficult to return his gaze.

"Is it coming?" he asked. "That negg?"

It arrived five minutes later, under a little red felt cosy shaped like a hen's head.

"Found it in the kitchen drawer," Miss Chitty said, "one day when I was turning out for the Brigadier. Must've belonged to the other little boy — Mrs. Meers' little boy David."

"I expect so," Celia said. She lifted the little cosy, seeming to feel David's fingers as she did so. "Oh, look, Edmund!" she cried delighted.

The Brigadier did it," Miss Chitty said, with pride.

The egg had a pencilled face and a paper collar had been fitted into the egg-cup. There was only one drawback to this truly brilliant idea. They couldn't induce Edmund to eat the egg when the top of its head had been taken off. He looked at the ruined face and began to cry.

"He's worn out, poor little thing," Celia said quickly.

Then she began to laugh. She had not expected instinct to hand her the accepted excuse for a crying child.

Celia had invited Mary Davenport to spend the second week-end of the year at the cottage. As soon as the invitation had been accepted she wondered what on earth had possessed her to issue it, and by the time the visit was coming she wished with all her heart for some accident that might prevent it. After only a fortnight of Edmund's company she felt she was not ready — at any rate for this particular guest.

For the past two weeks Celia had lived a life at once intimate and unreal. She had no one to help her with the housework and because she was inexperienced everything took twice as long. The morning spent itself in a flurry of dusting and getting the lunch, the afternoon in washing up the dirty dishes and taking Edmund for a walk, the evening in getting him to bed, clearing up after him, sitting down to mend his socks and jerseys.

She was unused to cooking and her failures depressed her deeply. And Edmund would not be persuaded to eat his meals. Day after day, however, she watched him spread his potato or his pudding carefully about the plate and eat one or two tiny spoonfuls from the

edge. Then she would gather it into a heap again and spoon it into his reluctant mouth as though he were half his age. She hated doing this. This meal-time battle was the symbol of the conflict between them.

He had accepted the change in his life, it seemed. He appeared to be quite content. And yet there was something that kept them apart. He would not submit to anything approaching an embrace, but he obviously quite liked her company. Within a couple of days after his arrival he was calling her from one room to another in a loud, demanding voice. It was going to be all right, she told herself. Eventually she would break down the unnamed barrier between them.

On Friday at lunch-time she told him that there would be a visitor for the week-end.

"When?" he asked.

"Tomorrow morning. We'll go to the station to meet her. Would you like that?"

"Yes."

"Yes what?" she asked automatically.

"Yes, Cillier."

She had wondered what he was to call her, for some things were prohibited, but this he had arranged for himself on the second day.

For the rest of that day Edmund was in high spirits. He allowed her to join in one of his freely-invented games, a privilege hitherto denied her. After tea the brigadier came to call and Edmund behaved so perfectly that Celia felt quite elated.

The next day was colder than ever. Celia went to the station with Edmund and they stamped their feet as they waited for the train, which of course was late. Mary came sweeping along the platform, looking fatter than ever in a long fur coat. It was at once apparent that by-gones were to be by-gones.

"Celia, my dear—there you are!" Mary enveloped her in a discreetly scented embrace. "I am greatly relieved that you've come to fetch me, for I've stupidly mislaid your address." She looked down at Edmund. "And this is the boy?"

"Shake hands, Edmund," Celia said. She looked down at him. She was totally unprepared for what she saw. His eagerness, his excitement had kept him jigging and dancing as they waited for Mary's train. His eyes had never been brighter. Yet now, as he obediently held out his hand, his face was so pale that it almost frightened her. It was the pallor of shock, and almost immediately his eyes filled with tears.

A positive despair seized Celia. It was as though all the good work of the past two weeks was thrown away. To make matters worse, the child was fighting and struggling with his distress and she knew she would only be repulsed if she attempted to comfort him. And, anyway, what was the matter with him—what had happened?

It couldn't be that he had taken an immediate dislike to Mary—surely? Mary took Edmund's hand in hers and, with the awful assurance of certain adults, bent to kiss him. But he drew away, removing himself to safety behind Celia. This in itself she found encouraging, for she was entirely humble in her struggle for his confidence and such tiny favors could not but be received with gratitude.

Celia was bound to admit that Mary behaved very well. She went through the cottage enthusiastically praising it; she took pains with Edmund; she cut bread and butter for tea and even peeled potatoes, and she found in the dead garden and the lane beyond, enough strange twigs and berries to make a decorative bowl for Celia's desk.

After the first encounter, Edmund

was polite to Mary. She was shown his red engine, and he watched with flattering attention while she put together one of his picture puzzles. But he never quite relaxed his watchful regard and more than once Celia saw him redden and wondered if there would be tears. She realised that she had misled him and he had not understood when she spoke of the coming guest. He had expected—whom? His grandmother, as he called her? Was it the disappointment of seeing a stranger that had made his eyes fill when he saw Mary at the station?

Celia hated to admit it. It brought her too near the edge of defeat—it kept her awake with the thought that even now she would have to give in and send him back to Richmond. Or had he expected someone else—whose name had never been spoken, whose memory she had hoped was fading fast? Had his excitement, his loud voice, and dancing feet, his promises and his wide shining eyes—had they all been for the hope of Elaine?

This was the worse problem to face. She could not return him to Elaine, and if it was Elaine he was craving for, then the future held nothing but a struggle with an enemy safely departed, with whom it was impossible to come to grips.

In vain she told herself that she worried needlessly, that so young a child forgot a face in a matter of weeks. In her desire to win Edmund, Celia had been able to accept that she herself must forget his father. But the child's mind was closed to her. Though in time he might seem to be hers, how could she ever be sure?

SUNDAY was bitterly cold. When she had made her contribution to preparing the lunch, Mary took Edmund out for a walk.

Celia opened the window as Mary and Edmund reached the gate.

"Don't go too far, Edmund, don't take her too far. It's getting colder, I think."

Next day, when Mary had gone, the snow began. It came first in little half-hearted flurries, and the washing that Celia, true housewife, had put out on this Monday morning, stiffened and lay without movement except when the wind snapped suddenly down the length of the village street, bringing the reluctant flakes with it.

"If it snows properly we'll build a snowman," Celia promised Edmund.

"With eyes?"

"Yes—and a hat," she said, recklessly sacrificing an old felt that might have done another turn. "We'll throw snowballs at him and knock off his hat."

This prospect reduced Edmund to flustering veils of laughter. He had been very cheerful ever since Mary left for the station, busy about the house on concerns of his own.

"Have you ever—" she began, and then bit back the words. Have you ever made a snowman before, she had been going to say. But this was the sort of memory test that she dared not make.

"Granny said a snowman, too," he said suddenly, sharp on the track of her unspoken thought—or at least a part of it. "When it snows, she said, we'll have a snowman. But she didn't say a hat," he added generously.

"I didn't snow when you were at Granny's."

"It was going to. She promised."

By a happy chance the reckless Mrs. Fanshawe had been rendered omniscient.

"This snow isn't Granny's snow," she said firmly.

He had moved to the window and

now she went and stood beside him. She wondered if she might put her arm round him, he seemed very friendly and confidential. At least, now he knew her as authority, as the provider, as home. He had, she assured herself, at least in material things, quite settled down. She put her hand out and smoothed his hair, but he jerked his head away and hunched his skinny shoulders.

"Which day will Granny come?" he asked, confounding her.

Celia tried not to sigh. "One day soon. When the weather's warmer."

Mrs. Fanshawe had telephoned on Sunday night. She had been unexpectedly reasonable. "I thought I should wait a little before ringing up," she had said. "By now I'm sure he is quite at home." Blast her good sense, Celia had thought, violently, as she finally replaced the receiver.

"The day she comes," Edmund said, "shall we make her a nice custard?"

This time it was Celia who laughed. Poor child, she was for ever expecting him to enjoy a nice custard.

"Or a plum pudding?" he suggested, heartened by her acceptance of his joke. "Or—perhaps—ice-cream? Do you ever have ice-cream in your house, Cillier?"

"You've never tasted ice-cream," Celia rebuked this war child.

"But I've read it!" he assured her.

And it was true that in his favourite book, written in verse she found practically impossible to read, there were two unpleasant children who were rewarded with ice-cream.

In the morning the world was white, and during the morning there was a blizzard. Edmund's hopes ran very high. The post was over an hour late, but when it came there was a parcel for Edmund from Mary Davenport. Celia left him to struggle with string while she took the breakfast things into the kitchen. Presently he came out to her with a book in his hand.

"There's got to be a snowman, Cillier," he said earnestly.

There was a snowman on the cover of the book, which was clearly concerned with his adventures.

"He's called Hercules," she said, turning the pages.

Then she looked again at the cover. The book was written by the only author of children's stories she had ever met—Robert Grandson, who had been at Cortanza. As she moved into the house that day, with the snow whirling outside the windows, Celia was thinking of the lake and the island, the hot sun, the flowers, the picnic at Varese, Nina languid in her room; and Edward walking in a light suit across the sun-filled piazza at Cortanza. She heard Edmund dragging some toy in the hall, its wheels screeching sickeningly on the boards. How difficult . . . oh, how difficult it was to believe . . .

After the blizzard the snow cleared. Celia was sorry for Edmund's disappointment, but perhaps not altogether and that Granny had slipped up. She read the snowman book to Edmund and they planned, if the chance ever came, to call their snowman Hercules, too.

It was not until a month later that the whiteness finally settled on the countryside. Now the snow was really thick, dry and crisp, piled on the branches, sparkling in sunshine that came to brighten it for two hours in the middle of the day, resting then behind an advancing blanket of leaden cloud.

In the early mornings the village children went chattering and shrieking on their way to school, pelting one another with snowballs, filling the air with noise, with a gaiety of a kind only heard, perhaps, in snowy weather.

Edmund watched the school children with his nose pressed against the window pane.

"You'll get it frostbitten," Celia said, "then you'll look funny."
He moved back, shuffling his knees on the window seat, which immediately seemed to her to be full of threatening splinters.

"Mind—" she began; then she bit it back. Each time she foresaw disaster of this kind she had to tell herself not to behave like an old woman.

In the middle of the morning Brigadier Benson returned from London, where he had been staying for a week, and having dumped his luggage at home he came down the street and rang Celia's bell.

"Promised Barney I'd come in and see you—he wants an up-to-date report on the boy. Where is he?"

"He's under the table at the moment," Celia said. "It's nice to see you. Do soldiers drink rum, too? I've got half a bottle hidden and it really does seem just the morning."

He puffed at his moustache for a bit and then accepted the drink. Celia bent down and peered at Edmund, who was sitting cross-legged under the table, completely hidden by the blanket which at his request had been draped across the top.

"The brig's here, sitting Bull," she said.

The child gave her a cold stare.

"What do you mean?"

"Aren't you a Red Indian?" Celia asked, already feeling hopelessly facetious.

"I'm a frog in a hole," he replied, as though this should have been obvious to the meanest intelligence. "I'll come out in a moment. I've just got to eat this grass."

Celia rose up rather pink in the face. "Does Barney snub you much?" she asked.

"Snub me? Wouldn't stand for it." He lifted the blanket with his stick. "Hey, young feller, where's your manners? Come out of that and say good morning."

Edmund came.

He stood in front of the brig with his hands behind his back.

"Well? What's your name, eh?"

"Edmund James Fanshawe. And I'm a captain," the child replied, surprisingly.

"Captain of what? What's your regiment? Who's your C.O.?"

Here Edmund broke down. "Frog regiment," he said uncertainly, and sidled up to Celia.

"Best you can do?" the Brigadier demanded.

"Yes."

"Yes what?"

"Yes, it is."

"Yes, sir."

"Yes," Edmund said.

At this point his interrogator melted and produced from his pocket a pencil that was red one end, blue at the other.

"Can't get this sort of thing in England now. Came in a parcel from America. Meant for Barney—but he's handing it on to you. Do you want it, young feller?"

Thus time Edmund came up to scratch.

"Sir!" he cried. "Yes!"

In this snowy weather, when the walk to the bus stop was a feat of endurance, Celia did the bulk of her shopping at the village store. In fact, this took hardly less time than trailing all the way into Climping Cross, but it was at least less physically exhausting.

After lunch, the day the Brigadier called, Celia took Edmund out for a walk which concluded the shop. They were delayed on the way because he had insisted on bringing the new pencil with him and he constantly let it slip out of his gloved hands. Each

time it was picked up out of the snow it had to be very carefully wiped. Celia's suggestion that she might put the thing in her pocket was coldly received.

The simple pleasure of walking in the village with Edmund at her side, even though none but she knew the truth, induced in Celia a warm glow of well-being. From the top of the village, where the manor was being restored after the occupation of the military, there came a sound of sawing and hammering. Soldiers were still using the parish hall, however, and two of them were sweeping the snow off the steps. They looked across and shouted at Edmund, who bellowed back. Soon, now, the war would be over. Soon the last soldier would be gone and death banished from the skies. How remote, in spite of the soldiers, how remote it seemed in this place.

Except for the moment in Italy, except when Edward had gone away, except when Elaine and James were killed, the war had seemed remote to Celia. It was the personal tragedy, the personal satisfaction which had had most influence with her—the rest at times had the distant quality of illusion. Sometimes this realisation shamed her, but mostly she was unaware of it. Nor was she the only one held by that paradox, through which, though others had died, she for the first time had lived.

WHEN Celia went with Edmund into the village store, two women and a girl were already ahead of her. Deep in conversation, they paused and turned as she entered, nodded her a friendly greeting, and then went straight back to their gossip. They were Mrs. Thomsett, Mrs. Kemp, and Mrs. Kemp's daughter Anita.

"Two years it is," Celia heard. "A full two years, and see what it brought her."

Mrs. Hoad smiled at Celia across the counter.

"It's Mrs. Tuppen," she explained.

"News just came this morning her husband's killed in Burma."

"Oh poor soul!" Celia said. "And all those children!"

Mrs. Thomsett and Mrs. Kemp exchanged glances.

"Yes—four of 'em just at the moment," said Mrs. Thomsett.

"But you never know," said Mrs. Kemp.

"Oh, Mum!" cried Anita.

"Two years since he was home," Mrs. Thomsett continued, underlining their remarks. "Her husband, that is."

They titrated mildly.

Celia began to feel embarrassed. She knew Mrs. Tuppen well, for she got eggs from her. The children swarmed in the cottage. True, there were only four, and a more generous age would have called the family small. None the less, they seemed to be everywhere; their nearness in age increased the impression of numbers. The mother was a charming young woman with pink cheeks and hair as intensely gold as any Celia had ever seen.

Her impulse now was to rush to Mrs. Tuppen's defence, but since nothing had been stated except by implication she hesitated to do so. At least she told herself that this was the reason for her hesitation. Or was it something that came nearer home? Did she, in fact, hesitate to claim what she could only recognise as her kinship with the woman?

"My pencil," Edmund said, holding it out for Mrs. Hoad's admiration and most conveniently changing the subject.

"What pencil's that, my duck?"

"From American," Edmund explained. "It's got two colors."

"That's a proper beauty, I'm sure. Now who gave you that? Was it Auntie?"

Edmund looked puzzled at this.

"He calls me by my name," Celia explained, very slightly on the defensive, knowing in advance that they would not give her the opportunity of being irritated by their disapproval, which they would keep to themselves.

"Fancy that," said Mrs. Hoad, as non-committal as Celia had expected.

"I was going to Mrs. Tuppen to collect my eggs," Celia said, looking at the four expressionless faces. "I'd better wait till tomorrow."

"Oh, I'm sure she won't mind," Mrs. Thomsett said at once. "When my Harry went I was glad of a bit of sympathy."

Celia now proceeded with her purchases. Mrs. Hoad gave Edmund a blanch, benevolence in every ounce of her great bulk, and then the pair of them left the shop. Within the shop, isolated by the glass, the faces were turned momentarily after her.

She smiled, nervously perhaps. Before she stepped into the street she glanced back quickly over her shoulder. The conversation had begun again. She saw their mouths soundlessly moving. Were they talking still about Mrs. Tuppen, or had they found a more promising subject in Celia Scarle?

"Don't squeeze," Edmund protested, wringing his hand in her grasp.

"Sorry. Shall we go and see Mrs. Tuppen? You can play with Shirley and Ronnie while we're talking."

Edmund walked up the path behind, kicking at the snow and muttering under his breath, "Shirley and Ronnie and Ron." Then he mimicked in a miming voice, "You can play with Shirley and Ronnie."

When Celia looked sharply back at him, he returned her a bland and blissful smile.

Mrs. Tuppen opened the door and asked Celia in. The cottage, usually so tidy in spite of the children, today was in chaos. The dinner things remained unwashed by the sink, the cloth was still on the table. The youngest child ran round the kitchen without any knickers, shrieking with incongruous laughter. But the eldest girl, aged about seven, with solemn and frightened maturity, was ironing at a board in the far corner by the cooker.

"Did you hear, miss?" the woman asked.

"Just now—I was in the shop. I didn't know whether to come. But I wanted to tell you how sorry I am."

Mrs. Tuppen's merry face was blotched and her bright hair straggled on her forehead and at her neck.

"He wasn't a good husband," she replied, surprisingly. She looked speculatively at the children. "It's not the worst of it that he's dead," she said, in a hard, unfamiliar voice. "I suppose they told you all about it at the shop."

"No, I—no, no really."

"Near enough, eh?" She pushed back hair and rubbed her forehead helplessly. "Things never do turn out the way you want," she said.

"What will you do?" Celia asked. "Let me help if I can." She was tagged by her feeling of obligation.

"I'll get a pension, I reckon. But that's not much. I'll have to get work. Mrs. Crutenden was wanting someone. I know she's hard, but she's fair."

"Cleaning you mean?"

"Charring—yes. Shirley can look after the kids in the holidays."

"Will you come and work for me?" Celia asked.

"There'll be the baby in May."

"Until then—or until you want to stop. And after."

"You're very good," Mrs. Tuppen

said, turning away. "It isn't charity, is it?"

"No, it isn't charity. It's just that—that I know how things never turn out the way you want."

Without looking at her, the woman answered, "Till come next Monday. Is nine early enough—when I've got them off to school?"

"Nine till twelve," Cella said.

When she left the cottage she was a little sobered by her own impulse. Although James had left her enough to live on it was not enough for luxuries and she knew perfectly well that she would find herself obliged to pay Mrs. Tuppen more than she was worth. The trust money would cover Edmund's education, but schooling alone would not be enough. She must be able to give him good holidays and the kind of extras that were important. She had fully intended doing all the work of the cottage herself, for economy's sake and because it was a penance.

However, she was now committed to Mrs. Tuppen and perhaps somewhere there was an account in which this impulse might be entered on the credit side. And she would have much to learn from the countrywoman, who certainly had not thought of running away or of disposing of the unwanted baby...

When the snow was thick on the grass, Cella and Edmund made their snowman in the front garden, under the apple tree. The hat was sacrificed, and the brigadier, nobly collaborating, contributed a broken pipe. The snowman was of course called Hercules and Cella told herself that she would write to Robert Grandson and tell him what pleasure his story had given. For the week that the snow lasted, Hercules stood proudly upright and for that time he became the centre of Edmund's world.

Holly berries were picked and placed on ivy leaf plates for Hercules' meals, of which he had many in a day. An old muffler had to be wrapped round his neck at night. At the end of the seven days the wind came with a storm of such violence that Cella shivered in her bed. She got up and huddled into her dressing-gown and went into Edmund's room. But he was sleeping soundly. She stood for a time expecting him to rouse, then she went back to bed. She lay awake a long time.

Cella did not admit to herself how much she wanted to hear Edmund cry out, how greatly she would have liked to soothe his fears. It seemed to her that at such a moment she might be able to force the barrier at last and get rid for good of that determined aloofness which so baffled and confused her. Or was this his nature and would he never soften? Had the firm refusal of more sentiment which had distressed her in the father come already to small fruition in the son? She hated to admit it.

She told herself again and again that Edward's aloofness had been the cover for tenderness and passion—there was no coldness in it. But although by now Edward's son would laugh with her, would listen to her, would rely on her—would even fetch and carry for her unasked—he showed no more signs of fondness than he had offered her at the start. It would be better for her if she could forget that she had seen him first clasped in Mrs. Fanshawe's arms.

Before morning the wind had swung round to the west and the thaw had begun. When Cella dragged herself from bed at last and went to the window, she saw the real world reappearing before her eyes, the snow so rapidly melting that she could watch the widening patches of green on the sides of the downs and see the early spikes of crocus and snowdrop sticking

off the concretion of a week. A river ran down the village street. She saw the cowman in the yard opposite slopping about in water halfway up his rubber boots. There was a great cascade from the elm tree at the gate.

So strange a joyousness was in this coming out of bondage that Cella felt within herself an answering surge of happiness. Then she suddenly caught sight of a mound of snow under the apple tree. Alas, poor Hercules! He had gone to his end—indeed, nothing but his hat remained in evidence of his sturdy existence.

At breakfast, Edmund chose to be excited by the sudden miraculous disappearance of the snow. This distracted him from thoughts of the snowman. But as soon as he was able to pull on his boots and gloves and go outside he went as by custom to the holly bush at the bottom of the garden, where for the past several mornings he had gathered breakfast for Hercules. Cella watched him go and knew herself helpless. There was nothing for it, he would have to find out for himself. She watched him go down the path. Suddenly, before he reached the holly bush, he paused. He stood absolutely still. Then he turned on his heel and began walking rapidly across the soaking grass to the front of the house. Cella went into the kitchen and began washing up the breakfast things.

PRESENTLY, Edmund came back into the house. She stood in the kitchen waiting for the outburst, waiting to hear him call her name. But he was silent and presently she came into the hall to look for him. He was leaning against the banisters and kicking with the toe of his boot at the bottom stair. He looked up at her briefly and then back at his foot.

"Never mind, darling," she said, "we'll find something else just as nice."

He looked at her again. "It's Hercules I want," he said coldly.

"The snow had to melt, you see, and poor Hercules was made of snow. The snow's all turned to water and Hercules has floated away. I'm sure," she said desperately, "that he's perfectly happy."

"Where is the water, Cillier?"

"I'm afraid it's all gone away into the earth."

He asked deeply, "If only it was in a little puddle and I could sail a boat and the boat could be Hercules."

"Shall we make a boat now? A paper boat—and write Hercules on it? Shall we?"

"No, thank you," he said.

"What shall we do then?" she asked helplessly.

He made no reply. He went up the stairs without looking at her again. Presently she heard his bedroom door close.

Cella went back into the kitchen, where she found Mrs. Tuppen unbuttoning her coat.

"Real wild old day, it is," she said, shaking back her hair. "What a row in the night too! I had Shirr running in to me in her nightie. She stayed with me the rest of the night. Funny how a storm frightens them, isn't it?"

"Yes," Cella said, obediently, "it is indeed."

"There—you've been at the breakfast things again! I do wish you wouldn't."

Cella did not hear herself make any reply to this for her mind was busy with other things. Edmund needed other children to play with, not grown-ups blundering in upon his more secret occupations. At once the awful boogie of boarding-school reared up in her too active imagination. A child alone with one adult he would have to go early. He would be five in July. She

could give herself another two years after that, but no more.

She roused herself, went into the sitting-room to see that the fire was burning properly, and then went to the foot of the stairs and listened. She heard Edmund talking to himself in his own room. He sounded quite cheerful. Probably the first tragedy had already worn away.

Cella went very quietly to his door. It had swung back again after he shut it, for the catch was weak. She stood behind the half-open door and watched and listened. What she saw was Edmund lying on the bed with his back to her, talking to himself; what she heard was so utterly destructive that for a moment she felt quite faint.

"Yes, mummy," Edmund was saying in a voice at once low and conversational, an accustomed voice. "Yes, I do, mummy. I do! Yes, mummy; no, mummy. I didn't, mummy. No, mummy. Yes, mummy." Then he laughed. He flung himself on his back and laughed breathlessly, throwing himself about as though someone was tickling him.

Cella's blood ran cold. She thought there was a ghost in the room. Then she realised that Edmund's movements, though they were so nearly natural, had the slightly strained care of someone playing charades. She remembered how often she had heard him talking to himself in bed at night, and shivered.

He turned his head suddenly and she shrank back behind the door, hardly daring to breathe, her heart so violently thudding that she had to press her hand against it—as though that might subdue the beat.

Edmund was silent for a moment. He stared towards the door as wary as a rabbit five yards from its burrow. Cella trembled, knowing that if he saw her now her last chance was gone for ever. He would never forgive her.

But the moment passed. He decided that he was safe. He turned back, so that she could no longer see his face. He began his quiet conversation once again.

She understood then his disappointment when he saw Mary Davenport. She understood so much more than that. She had not expected to be openly challenged by Elaine. She moved away silently and went downstairs again.

She walked through the cottage from room to room with her arms clasped about her, fighting her desire to lie down and cry. If only she could hate Elaine. But there was nothing there to hold on to, nothing. She could not punish an intruder who was invisible to her, who existed only in the mind and imagination of the child. And how could she even wish to punish Elaine, who deserved nothing but love and praise for her care of Edmund?

She tried to thrust it all away from her, to go back to the moment of time when she heard Edmund's door close, when she was still ignorant of how far she still had to go. But the challenge had been given. She was either to accept it or admit defeat. She gritted her teeth. Even now she was not going to admit herself beaten.

She heard Edmund coming downstairs as she stood helplessly by the window staring into the garden. She felt herself rearrange her stiff, unhappy face.

"What about that boat?" he asked, as he came into the room.

When the Verneys came back to live in the Manor, everyone in West Winch said the war was really over. It wasn't—not quite; but the soldiers had left the village and nothing remained but the job of cleaning up after them.

In the cottage there were now two cats; one tabby called Lucy Lockitt, one white Persian tom known as Snow-

drop; and it somehow seemed to Cella that the addition of the animals improved the general domestic outlook. It was as though she told herself that Edmund would not have asked for the creature at all unless he had meant to stay. It never occurred to her that she might be too humble; nor indeed did Edmund himself give her occasion to think so, for he remained as self-contained as ever.

The downs were still officially military territory and threatening notices warned of disaster to trespassers beginning to take their old walks there. Cella went there first with Barney at the beginning of the Easter holiday, leaving Edmund and the Brig to amuse themselves.

When they left the hilltop they came down across a field where cattle had been grazed. The day before, Barney said, they had driven a hundred head of cattle down from the top grazing, youngsters and adults both. Two bull calves had taken fright and gone tearing away into the valley, side by side, their heads and buttocks rhythmically rising and falling, their unhappy voices finding as they gained a distance into which they were pursued by shouting men.

"They're not really very decent to the animals, are they?" Barney said. "Not once you've opened your eyes."

There was one red heller left behind in the field from which the rest had been driven. She was lying over by the wire fence and Barney saw her first.

"Do you think she's dead?" he asked, standing stock-still, hesitating to find out.

They went across the grass to the animal and saw that she was caught on the lower strand of wire. Her head had fallen forward till it was resting on the ground. Her eyes were gummy and her mouth was thick with slobber. Her sides heaved but with surprising gentleness.

"Run and fetch someone," Cella said. "I'll stay. Only be quick! If you can't find anyone, get some wire cutters."

Barney came with the young stockman, who carried wire cutters. When he cut the wire the heller fell towards the edge of the high bank and Cella and Barney had to heave with him to get her back into safety. The stockman rolled the animal on to her back. On the whole, her injuries were nothing like as bad as have might have been. But her unprotected belly was torn and lacerated.

"Must've got left behind when we took the rest," the stockman said. "Been here a tidy while be the looks of 'er."

"Don't you ever count the herd?" Cella asked coldly. "Has she been here ever since yesterday afternoon?"

The young man said he would fetch her water and hay. After they had stayed a little while looking helplessly at the heller, who now blew and groaned, Cella and Barney went in a rather subdued frame of mind to have tea at Priory Lodge.

"I say, just look at this!" Edmund cried when he saw her, in faithful echo of the god-like Barney. "It's a present from somebody for somebody."

Mary Davenport had sent him another book by the same author. This time it was about a cow. There she was on the cover, with a garland of daisies round her neck, beautiful and happy; and inside was the merry story of her life.

As she looked at Robert Grandson's name, Cella wanted to throw the book back in his face. And, indeed, that evening she sat down and wrote him a letter which she sent care of his publishers. It isn't like that, she told him. There's nothing so pretty here.

A fortnight later she received a note

from his secretary, informing her that Mr. Grandson was in America, but would answer her letter on his return. His secretary, Good for Robert. She hoped he would write.

One day in summer when Edmund had had his fifth birthday, Cella walked with him on the top of the downs.

Edmund ran ahead of Cella on the grassy track and the puppy she had given him for his birthday ran with him. He had hurried himself on her track when he saw the puppy, but this demonstration she recognised for what it was. Often nowadays she blamed herself for not having spoken to him of Elaine. It was too late now. For better or worse they had both maintained their silence.

When Edmund found the picnic place, a circle of cushioned grass by the dewpond on the second hill, he waited for Cella to come up and stake a claim, then ran off with the puppy at his heels. She had impressed upon him that he must keep to the paths, but she found it difficult not to call after him. She was for ever checking herself in this, afraid to nag, yet terrified of his daring. It was a relief when she could call him to tea.

"Sillyberry jam, I hope," he said, as he flung himself down on the grass.

Infected by his energy, the puppy blundered across the sandwiches and buns, narrowly missing the thermos of tea.

"Pick her up!" Cella cried.

Edmund scooped up the puppy and immediately put his elbow into the mug of milk Cella had put down at his side.

CELLA could not imagine why this sort of thing failed entirely to annoy her. Her patience was endless, but she could not help herself. She would spoil the boy, that she would ruin his self-control by giving in to him, it was not so much that she indulged him as that he never seemed to make her angry.

They had their tussles, but they were quiet ones. Anytime Edmund no longer cried. He had a strange restraint that bit back actual tears, though he would go red in the face with anger or disappointment. This ability sometimes frightened her. She could not forget the first time he had sought his comfort in solitude, and she had no idea whether, when he stalked away from her after some struggle or other, he still conversed in his room with the memory of Elaine.

As she buttered a bun and handed it to him she asked him a question that had been on her reluctant tongue for a couple of days.

"How would you like to go and stay with Granny at Richmond?" she asked, in the carefully casual voice she had rehearsed more than once. "She's invited you."

"Stay there?"

"For a holiday, you know. Perhaps for two weeks."

"That's 14 days, isn't it?" he asked.

"Yes, fourteen days."

"That's a very long time, Ciller."

She could not help smiling in her pleasure at what seemed obvious reluctance.

He pulled the ears of the guppy. "Would you absolutely promise to take Bella for walks?"

"Of course," she said, deflated. "What about me? Who's going to look after me?"

He quoted: "You're quite old enough to take care of yourself, my dear."

"Then you'd like to go?"

"Yes, Yes, I would."

"You only care what happens to Bella—never mind poor old Ciller."

"But I can't explain to Bella that I'll be home in 14 days," he said.

Thus gracefully he gave back what he had threatened to take away from her. In her gratitude she began to flatter Mrs. Fanshawe, her first enemy since Mirette Audomars.

"I'm sure Crazy will take you on the river, Edmund. And there's Jessie. You liked Jessie, didn't you?"

"I could come home in seven days or ten, I suppose, if I wanted to?"

"Yes, of course," she said, not daring to look at him.

That evening Cella reluctantly telephoned Mrs. Fanshawe. Edmund would so much like to visit her, she said, her voice firm and cheerful. Quite unexpectedly, Mrs. Fanshawe repaid her.

"He's very generous of you, my dear Cella. I know how hard it is to part with him."

If there was a sting in the tail of this remark, Cella wisely decided that it should be ignored. She said she would bring Edmund to Richmond at the appointed time.

"Dear—and Jessie shall bring him back."

"He's grown a lot. And I think he's filled out."

"He's happy with you in the country, I'm sure of that," Mrs. Fanshawe astomishingly said. "It's the best place for children. I shall look forward to seeing you both."

The day Cella returned from Richmond, Mrs. Tuppen came back to work. The cottage seemed very quiet. The new baby slept discreetly in his pram by the kitchen door. Cella wished that he would cry. She walked aimlessly through the empty rooms, wondering how she had ever contemplated living here alone. She was annoyed by her own feeling of helpless loneliness.

She reminded herself yet again that Edmund would have to go away to school when he was seven or eight, and her depression increased. She would have to find herself some work. She might get a lecturing job in the country, there seemed to be plenty of people who wanted to be lectured to. She must look into the possibility of buying a small car.

About nine o'clock that evening, Cella went up the villare to Priory Lodge in search of company. She knew plenty of people in the village now—but her keenest sympathy was with the old man—perhaps because he was the first person she had spoken to when she came that day so sublimely to Climping Cross, perhaps because she had never known her father, perhaps because of Barney. As Mrs. Chitty opened the door for Cella, Barney fled across the hall in his pyjamas and bounded up the stairs. He stopped behind the barrier of the banisters to call out to her.

"My mother's coming tomorrow. Shall I bring her to tea?"

"Oh, Barney, do! It's such ages since I saw her."

"She likes you, too," Barney said. "She says you've got a good face."

Then he blushed hotly. "I don't think she meant good, but good."

A voice called from the drawing-room.

"There's the Brig calling you," Barney said, and vanished up the remaining stairs to his room.

The Brigadier was sitting by the open french-window in his neat drawing-room.

"You'll have some coffee? Barney and I had our supper late. Another pot, Miss Chitty, if you please . . . Where've you been, Cella? Haven't seen you or the boy for days."

"I've just taken him to stay with— I've just taken him to Richmond to stay with Mrs. Fanshawe."

"That's the grandmother?"

Cella hesitated, then nodded.

"First time he's been away since you took over?"

Again she nodded. "I don't like the cottage this evening, so I had to come and pester you."

The Irish replied without delicacy. "He'll go to school. How about it then?"

"I don't know."

"I'll tell you. You'll put up with it and look forward to the holidays. In the evenings you can come up here and keep me company. Bring your ink-bottle."

She thanked him, but wished he would speak of other things.

"Barney tells me his mother's coming down tomorrow. I suppose her war job's ended?"

"Yes," he said, "it's ended. It's over now."

For with the old soldier's strange shyness of violence, he was delighted that the war was over. Though he had been a professional soldier, had deliberately chosen this career and sought out wars in remote corners of the world, yet the thought that his son might perish had taken from him the pleasure of his own memories. There were tales he would never tell again.

The warm August evening moved gently in the scented garden as Celia and the Brigadier sat by the window of the unit room. The smoke from the old man's cigar floated across Celia's nostrils together with the heady scent of stock and tobacco plant.

"You know, m'dear," the old man said as he walked with her to her gate that evening. "I've got to say it again—you should have married and had a pack of kids. Suits you to be motherly. Did you know that? You should have some of your own."

"Edmund's not," she said.

But he took this metaphorically, and though she repeated it, liking the feel of the words, listening for the sound of them with quick intensity, yet she found herself unable to contradict his estimate. She went into the cottage and closed the door, telling herself for the hundredth time that her silence was Edmund's security.

But somewhere at the back of her mind she wondered if she protected Edmund more than she protected herself. All these new friends—if they knew the truth, how much difference would it make? If the friendship comes first and the fault afterwards, which is the stronger?

A day or two before Edmund was due to return, Celia went to call on Mrs. Verney at the Manor. The Vernys had a French governess—an almost extinct species, surely?—and there had already been some talk about one or two other children joining in the lessons. Edmund knew the two Vernys already and had professed some dislike for the boy, Giles; but closer acquaintance, thought Celia, with glib adult reasoning, would soon put an end to that.

Celia herself had little in common with Mrs. Verney, whose straight back and slightly Edwardian air reminded her of a younger Mary Davenport, but she had met the French girl and liked her very well.

"I think it would be a splendid idea," Mrs. Verney said at once. "A little competition, you know, Diana is older, of course, but Giles is Edmund's age and size and they should get on very well together. I'm sure Mademoiselle Thierry will be delighted."

The French girl came in then and they discussed the arrangements. Mademoiselle Thierry was no more than 26, having come to England with her parents after the fall of France. She was so unlike the usual idea of a French governess that Celia could not refrain from laughing.

"I am remembering the last French governess I knew," she explained. "She was plump and wore black. I'm fairly

certain her hair was dyed, and quite certain that she had the beginnings of a healthy beard!"

Even at this distance, it was pleasant to Celia to dismiss Mirette Audemars so cruelly.

Edmund returned in Jessie's charge on the day appointed. There had been no suggestion that he should stay longer at Richmond, and when Jessie, refusing to stop for luncheon, turned round and went straight home again, he certainly made no effort to detain her.

"Well—have you enjoyed yourself?" Celia asked him. She thought he looked different, as though while he was away he had grown up a little more and done it very well without her assistance.

"It was wizard," he replied.

"Who says wizard?"

"Everyone, I should think. One day Jessie took me on a steamer to Ampton Court. Have you ever been to Ampton Court, Cillier?"

"Yes, once. What did you think of it?"

"We had chocolate cakes for tea. It's a nice place."

After tea the eldest Tuppen came to ask if Edmund might go blackberrying with them. She watched them go down the path together. Edmund was stepping out sternly in an effort to match Ron's stride. She knew it was time he had more to do with children and she told herself she was glad she had arranged for him to go to the Manor. But how immediately it seemed to separate them!

WHEN Edmund came back stained blue with blackberry juice, Celia told him he was going to have lessons with the Verney children.

"When?" he asked, astounded.

"Next week."

"All day?"

"No—only in the mornings."

"Why not all day?"

"Because in the afternoon we like to go for a walk, don't we? And so does poor Bella."

"I should think she's got used to going with you by now," he said. "Can I have an injarubber?"

The next morning, Celia received the long-delayed answer to her letter from Robert Grandson. He wrote at length; he told her that his father was dead. He said he was sorry he had been too optimistic about the life of a cow. He also said he was sorry he hadn't answered her letter for so long. He hoped that when next she was coming to London, she would let him know, so that they might lunch together.

Celia took Edmund to the Manor on the first day of the new regime and deposited him in the schoolroom. The Verney children stared at him from the table at which they and their books were already disposed, and Edmund stared back. Presently Mademoiselle Thierry appeared on the scene and Celia turned thankfully to speak to her. As they stood talking, Celia caught a sudden glimpse of the room behind her reflected in the mirror on the far wall. Both Giles and Edmund had their tongues out. Celia escaped without further delay. She walked back slowly to the cottage and went into the kitchen to gossip with Mrs. Tuppen, who had just made the first of her cups of tea. She poured out a cup for Celia and the two of them sat at the bare kitchen table.

"How do you take it, Mrs. Tuppen? School, I mean."

"School? Bless you, they don't even notice it, the little beggars."

"It seems such a big step," Celia said, sighing sentimentally. "I suppose he'll have to go to boarding-school soon, too. Poor little wretch."

"Boarding-school? Never! Why, he's only five years old, miss!"

"I mean in two or three years."

"That's a proper old time."

"Is it? I'd like to think so."

Edmund was returned to the cottage at twelve-thirty, when the Verney children took their daily walk. He marched up the garden path with a casual, a too-casual air that warned Celia that all was not well.

"There you are," she said, coming to the open door. "Well? How did it go?"

Edmund smiled and said nothing. He came into the house and with surprising promptness went upstairs to wash his hands.

Mrs. Tuppen brought in the first course and Edmund did unusually well, for he was still inclined to finick with his food.

"You haven't told me how you got on, Edmund."

"I didn't use the rubber. I didn't have to."

"What else?"

There was a long pause. She looked up from her plate to see a scarlet face, and eyes bulging with tears. This was the more startling since he never cried nowadays, whatever the provocation. She wished she might comfort him by telling him he need never go to the Manor again.

"Something happened that you didn't like? What was it?"

The first two tears flopped out on to his cheeks and the scarlet drained away.

"Tell me," she said. "Tell me about it."

He got slowly down from his chair and came round to her side of the table. He leant hard against her and because this was the first advance he had ever made to her, she remained still and did not touch him.

"Cillier," he said at last in a small and wavering voice, "I mustn't ever go there again. And it's such a nice place. She's so nice. With curls."

"Tell me what happened, Edmund?"

"I threw the ink at Giles."

"The ink?"

"In a little sort of bowl, Cillier."

"An ink-bowl? It went in Giles' face."

"An ink-bowl? It went in Giles' face. In his mouth it went. Because he was shouting. And all over the wall."

"What was he shouting for?" Celia asked, with thoughts so old and melodramatic that she felt ashamed. "Was he shouting at you?"

"He was shouting at her."

"Do you mean Diana—or Mademoiselle Thierry?"

"Not Diana. The other one. He was white with rage," he elaborated, quoting a favorite story, "and he was going to hit her, and I threw the ink."

Celia was at a loss. She had not the least idea how to deal with a misdeed apparently so honest in intention.

"All over the wall?"

He nodded. "And in his mouth."

For a second this recollection gave him such obvious satisfaction that she thought he was going to recover his poise. But the details were too shocking. "And on his clothes. And in his hair."

Celia put him away from her and rose to her feet.

"I must telephone Mrs. Verney. This is simply terrible. Edmund, I know you thought you would stop Giles from hitting Mademoiselle—you did think that, didn't you?" she said sharply.

He nodded. "You must understand that you cannot go about throwing ink over other people's houses. Nor this one," she added hastily. "I'm going to ask Mrs. Verney if she will ever forgive you, and if she won't I shall have to send you to school somewhere else."

"With Ron and Shirly?"

"No. It will have to be further away than that."

With this she left him and went to the telephone in the hall.

Mrs. Verney was admirably restrained. She asked if Edmund had told her it was red ink.

"As it happened, Giles was wearing a bright red jersey and it simply doesn't show. We can wash his hair; and fortunately we took up the carpet when we turned the place into a schoolroom."

"But the wall . . ."

"Yes, there's the wall, of course. Mademoiselle suggests we leave it as it is and then he'll never do it again. Please don't worry about it. One expects a certain amount of wear and tear."

This delightful understatement was still ringing in Celia's ears when she returned to the table. She found Edmund employing himself by tying knots in the fringe of the linen tablecloth. He had shed some more tears before discovering this distraction, for the front of his jersey was wet as well as his face. She wondered how on earth she was to punish the dejected creature.

"Mrs. Verney has been very kind. You may go back there for lessons."

His face lit up. "Tomorrow?"

"No," she said, finding what she wanted. "Not until Wednesday. Now sit up and finish your dinner. Mrs. Tuppen will be wondering when to bring in the pudding."

She wiped his face and for once he submitted. He sat primly at the table and slowly, very slowly, but without protest, he finished the food on his plate. When the pudding came he stirred his stewed blackberries all over his plate, dreamily with the back of his spoon.

He glanced up at her the spoon halfway to his mouth.

"Do you know what this pudding tastes like, Cillier?"

"Like blackberries and custard, I imagine."

"It tastes like ink," he said dramatically.

"I'm very glad to hear it," Celia replied.

She knew she would never forget his look of outrage.

Celia had brought the car round and called Edmund from his room, when the telephone bell rang.

"You'll probably have forgotten me," the voice said. "It's Robert Grandson."

"I might be forgiven," Celia replied. "It must be two years since we exchanged letters."

"And I asked you to let me know when you were in London. Which you never did."

Robert was in Climping Cross on business and asked her to meet him there for lunch.

"I'm terribly sorry, Robert. It would have been lovely. But I'm just catching a train and I shan't be home till late this evening. What about tomorrow?"

But he had to return in the early evening and the next day he was going to Sweden on holiday.

"We'll try again when I get back," he said.

She had no time to think about this conversation, as they were now late and must make a dash for the station. The old car which Celia had acquired a little over a year ago rattled along the familiar road, took the hill at a rush and got them to the station just in time. The train was at the platform. They flung themselves in and sat back, panting.

It was a few weeks after Edmund's seventh birthday and they were on their way to Pembroke Lodge, a school for boys on the east coast, where they were to be guests at the annual sports. It had taken Celia a long time to discover where Edward Meers had gone to school, and it was rather a relief to find he had been a pupil at Pembroke Lodge which, while it did not make such heavy demands as a public school would have done, had an excellent reputation.

He would go as a boarder to the Junior School when he was eight. A year was a long time, Celia told herself. But as she looked across at Edmund sitting in the opposite corner of the carriage, wearing his first grey-flannel suit, she knew that a year would too soon be gone.

The occasion was being treated by Edmund with a reverent solemnity. He had declared frequently, perhaps too frequently, that he would like to go to boarding-school. Today he was silent and his expression was severe. He had sat apart from Celia in the train; in the taxi he stared firmly out of the window. He was now out of babyhood and the lightness and thinness of two years ago had hardened; he had knobby knees and ankles.

When they reached their destination he stood stiffly while Celia paid off the taxi. She walked ahead of him across the gravel drive, wishing she might take his hand. By the shrubbery two boys in running shorts and blazers stood waiting, the one with programmes of the afternoon's events, the other ready to conduct newcomers to their seats. As Celia and Edmund were shown to their places in the stand, polite clapping pattered upon the sunny afternoon.

"It's only the heats for the Junior High Jump," their escort said.

An impromptu grandstand was set before the cricket pavilion. The field was very big, wide as well as long, and the roped track looked insignificant in its midst. Beyond the track and the cricket pitch the grass was long, the field grass picked out with clover. The boys in their white running shorts and vests ringed at the neck with their house colors, ran and jumped, sat tense beyond the line, or wearing their bright blazers moved around and about the field, busy with the day's affairs.

The school buildings were vaguely seen behind the cricket pavilion. One block was a fine Georgian mansion, with a pillared portico, the second a modern version of the same style, inevitably clumsy, yet with fine clean lines.

"Do you think it looks nice?" Celia asked Edmund, between events.

"It's big," he said. "When shall we have tea? Is that it—over there?"

Alongside the field two marquees gleamed in the strong sunlight. One held the prizes displayed on a long table. The other was the tea tent. Inside and out there were tables.

Their white cloths fluttered in the breeze and green chairs stood invitingly.

"It's only half-past three," Celia said. "You must be patient. Look—here comes the hundred-yard flat race."

He looked up at her briefly, but she could not answer the appeal. It seemed horrifying to have to force this ordeal on a child, yet forced it must be by the demands of a system that offered no compromise.

"In another year you'll be looking forward to it," she said.

To this assurance he made no reply.

When the interval came and they walked across the grass to the marquee, Edmund seemed to have recovered his spirits. He had been thrown into convulsions of laughter by the juniors' sack race, and a boy of his own age sitting beside him had offered him a toffee. Perhaps he, too, was a future victim. The outlook astonishingly brightened. Edmund began to look about him with interest, eyeing the boys and the masters moving among them.

A boy of sixteen or so went by, wearing cricket colors, moving assuredly, looking for someone among the tables.

"His long white flannels!" Edmund said, in a stare, kicking Celia quite smartly under the table in his anxiety lest she might miss the vision.

"Yes—lovely."

She would come here summer after summer, and one day she would see Edmund moving among the tables in long white flannel trousers, searching for her, very slightly frowning, his hair neatly cut and his blazer suitably adorned. She had a very clear picture of him in her mind's eye.

So clear that she looked up again quickly at the object of his admiration, but the boy was already past and she could only see him in profile. Something of which she had had not the least suspicion suddenly appeared in her mind as a near certainty. She looked round, startled, searching for a face she would recognise.

"I'll just go and look at the prizes," Edmund said. "You stay here, Cillier. I won't be long."

She sat on in the pleasant sunshine, watching him walk away from her. At the tent opening he turned back to look at her, then he stepped inside. As she sat there a feeling of the wildest uneasiness possessed her. She sat waiting for something to happen, no longer searching among the crowd of faces but waiting with the calm of fatality for the inevitable.

It was therefore no shock to her when she saw Nina Meers walk past hanging on to her arm was the boy Edmund had so greatly admired.

For some reason it had simply never entered Celia's head that David, too, would come to his father's old school. Nina had been lost so long in America and David with her that they had ceased to have any reality for Celia. She looked up as he passed by with his mother, waiting for the moment of recognition that must surely come, uncertain if she feared or desired this.

Nina would have passed by without glancing in Celia's direction if Edmund had not suddenly shot out from the tent, calling her at the top of his voice.

"Cillier! They're terrific! There's a knife with three blades. Gosh, I wish I could win that! I wish I could! It's for the Visitors' Race."

The boy's voice attracted Nina's attention and she looked at him smiling, he was so excited, and then glanced after him as he returned to the table. So that as she came level she looked full into Celia's face.

For a moment it seemed as though she would go straight on. Then she checked in her course and came slowly to the table.

"It is you, isn't it, Celia?" There was the well-remembered lift of the brows, the faintly sardonic tone of the voice. "I couldn't believe it, you know. I'd have passed you by."

It was a surprise to Celia to find that she was quite calm. She asked Nina to sit down, she pulled up the

chair which Edmund had pushed out of reach.

"How are you, Nina? What a very great surprise!"

"Extraordinary," Nina agreed, sitting down and looking at Celia in an inquisitive but friendly way. "You remember David, don't you? David—do you remember Miss Scarie? We met her in Italy."

"It's such ages," Celia said, smiling at David. "You were a very little boy." In fact he had been exactly the same age and size as Edmund was today.

"I do remember, though," the boy said. "You drove home to England with us."

"There!" Nina cried. "See what an impression you must have made!"

She gave Celia another of those long, inquisitive glances. Then she looked at Edmund, who was standing beside Celia's chair.

"And we had ice at Cortanaa," David grinned.

"So we did."

"You married, then," Nina said, looking at Celia with a half smile. "Have you still got the cottage? I couldn't help knowing about that," she added.

"I've still got the cottage, and I'm not married."

"Your nephew, then? He has the look of you."

"My sister was killed," Celia began. Then she left the sentence in mid-air, because she could not bear to justify herself to Nina, and because she had never before so longed for courage to speak the truth. She felt no responsibility towards Nina—indeed, she felt only gratitude. If Nina had not tried to get her husband, perhaps Celia would not have Edmund now.

"I'm only in England for a few weeks," Nina said. "I married again—an American. I've come over to fetch David home for the holidays."

It was time to return to the field. Nina and Celia walked side by side to find seats. Edmund kept step with David. When they had found seats and the two women sat down David spoke to Edmund.

"Come down by the track. You can see better."

Edmund followed him without a backward glance.

Nina looked after the pair of them. "He's like you, Celia. But he's like somebody else, too." She looked at Celia with a clear, straight glance. "Have I guessed right?"

For the first time, Celia answered "Yes," and for a moment the world so brightly blossomed that it seemed all her troubles must be at an end. "That's why we're here today, Nina. I thought I ought to send him to this school."

"How you've changed. When we met that time in Italy you were half afraid to open your mouth. I certainly underestimated your capabilities." She sighed lightly, and shrugged. "I thought I was in love at that time with a very tiresome young man. I've never blamed you or Edward. I threw you together."

"You take it very calmly."

"I think I've known about it for a long time. Ever since I mislaid an old photograph from the pile I got out of storage."

Celia opened her handbag. "It's here."

"Please don't show it to me now," Nina said, rather quickly. "When he died I had dreadful pangs of remorse. I wanted everything I could lay hands on."

"The cottage too?"

Nina shook her elegant head. "No. I was never meant to live in the country, Celia. . . . Anyway, the phase

was soon over. I've been married nearly six years."

Down by the track Edmund was weighed in with a crowd of small boys, remaining obediently where David had pushed him.

"I suppose they must never know?" Nina asked.

"No."

"It's your affair, my dear. But it's a great pity. When will he be coming to school?"

"Not until the autumn after next."

"When David has just left. They're not likely to meet after that, I imagine. Poor old David—he always wanted a brother."

For a moment Celia's heart was so warmed to Nina that she hesitated on the brink of full confession. But the moment passed. They sat in the declining sunshine in silence, each considering one man. Nina, who had now another husband, should not be greatly bothered by her memories. Celia, whose brief love affair had been swallowed up in its sequel, could no longer be certain of the sound of her lover's voice.

Only the two boys remained—one whose father was a faint echo in a fading past, the other for whom he had no existence. Poor Edward. The motive power of their four lives, he was no longer even a ghost. Perhaps when today was over he would never be spoken of again.

"Someone else from that time in Italy came to see me not long ago," Nina said. "Do you remember Robert Grandson? He was over to see his American publisher, and the publisher happens to be my husband."

"How strange, Nina. He telephoned only today, and I had to cut him off quickly and run to catch my train."

"He spoke about you. He said he had told you the war would kill his old father. And of course it did. The old man died before the end of that September."

Presently it was time to go home. The day was ended, the races run, the victors rewarded. Speeches had been made in the dusk, there had been cheering, and "God Save the King" had blazed through the amplifiers. It was all over for another year.

It was nearly midnight when Celia and Edmund got home.

"In to bed quickly," she told the boy. But he was not in the least sleepy. When she was ready for bed herself, after having taken Bella for her last walk and given the two cats milk, he called her into his room.

"I shall like it there," he said. "Truly. And with a shy perception that surprised and moved her, he added, 'Don't be lonely without me, will you, Cillie? We'll have lots of fun in the holidays. . . .'"

CELIA'S meeting with Nina haunted her for days. Again she had the impression that the uneasy pattern of her life had knotted one more handful of straggling threads. Yet still she knew the pattern was unfinished, and she began to wonder if the sensation of final incompleteness must remain.

That last year of Edmund's true childhood passed too quickly. But it was time for him to go. The Verney children had progressed from a governess to a day-school in Climping Cross, and Edmund went with them. But he was outgrowing this mild and friendly teaching. He was developing an arrogance that Celia found herself unable to curb, and she was bound to admit that he needed a stricter discipline. She did not spoil him, but he had the ability to charm her, which came to much the same thing. He had

been pert to the Vicar and his school report was shocking. Yet with it all, with the growing swagger and the certainty of personal supremacy, he retained his ingratiating manner, he had developed early the promise of a sense of humor, and he was consistently good-tempered.

In the middle of that last summer term, Edmund developed whooping-cough and Celia had him to herself for six long weeks before the term ended and the holidays began. He had not been ill before, except for a mild attack of measles, and he was a surprisingly patient invalid. It was pleasant to have these last weeks of his company, for after he had gone away to school things could never be the same again. And now, during the long quarantine, when they were relying so completely on one another, she discovered that he was as content as she was.

It was she who taught him during these weeks, and she wondered then how it was that she had ever revolved from teaching. His mind was quick and receptive, he learnt by heart at an incredible rate. He swallowed without any signs of indigestion the whole of "John Gilpin" and "The Ancient Mariner," and the fact that he also knew by heart the words of every dance tune he heard on the wireless made no difference to Celia's appreciation of his great promise. She had thought she would regret his babyhood but these formative years were more exciting than she had supposed possible.

They went away at the end of July to Port Polku, where they were to stay with Mrs. Rosewarne. If she had not known such great satisfaction in telling Nina the truth about Edmund, Celia might not have thought of Mrs. Rosewarne. But she was growing bolder. She wanted to be with someone who need not be lied to. She was unprepared for the warmth of their welcome at Port Polku, and for the enthusiasm with which Edmund and Mrs. Rosewarne took to one another.

"I didn't think you'd ever forgive me," Celia said, the first night of her stay, when Edmund had been sent to bed. "You despised me, didn't you? You thought I was quite unnatural."

"At first perhaps. Well—God was good to you, though he had to kill those two poor dears to give you your second chance." She looked at Celia and shook her head. "I'd hardly have recognised you. You're blossomed."

"I'm happy. He's mine now."

The Cornishwoman was silent a moment, then she said, "But he doesn't call you by the right name, my dear."

"No," said Celia. "He keeps me in my place." Then she laughed and said lightly, "Just Lynne to the life. And I've been a governess, too. Dead! And he never called me Mother!"

Mrs. Rosewarne, however, was not amused.

The weather was fine while they were in Cornwall. And still the gulls cried over the little town, waking Edmund and Celia very early in the morning, and by day parading on the shore, or drifting beyond the breakers, twenty or thirty in a group, wearing their self-important air and slightly swinging with the tide.

"I used to call them seagulls," Edmund remarked, in amused contempt at the memory. "How perfectly idiotic."

At night, when Edmund was in bed, Celia walked in the warm night air about the harbor, where now the lights laid upon the water converted the place from its daytime sternness, grey and unlovely, to a magic city whose towers and turrets were unseen. The fishing fleet went out with lights, the soft thudding of the engines tamed to

a gentle swishing murmur as they left the harbor and took the open sea.

There was some Methodist festival at hand. The men in the boats and the women left at home sang in practice the same hymns. The voices trailed across the water to the shore, the voices and the harmonium accompaniment trailed out from the cottages to the boats. Across the harbor, above the far wall, the customers at the Dolphin Inn sat on the winding stone steps before the open door of the bar, mugs in their hands, and sang too, the same slow harmonies.

And Celia, too, alone, hummed the tunes, uncertain and shy, yet feeling herself a part of the magic because of the attempt. When the lights went out in the Dolphin above the harbor, and the "Blue Anchor" down by the quay, Celia went slowly home. Mrs. Rosewarne would be sitting in her door, knitting in the dark of this moonless summer night.

"Can you smell the mignonette, my dear?"

The scent rose in a heady wave that brushed against Celia's cheek. She stood quite still in the darkness. It was years since she had felt such a surge of longing as rose in her then. She waited patiently for it to die away, but it remained with her, a pain for which she would find no cure. She longed for Mrs. Rosewarne to speak again and break the spell; she tried to speak herself, but her throat was dry. I am over forty years old, she told herself . . .

"Time to go indoors," Mrs. Rosewarne said, releasing her. "That lad's not slept yet. It's very warm. He keeps switching on his light. Had you better go up to him?"

"Yes, I'll go." She went into Edmund's room, opening the door softly.

"Hallo," he said, out of the darkness.

"You should be asleep."

"I've tried closing my eyes." He sat up in bed with the sheet drawn taut over his bony knees. "They were singing."

"I know."

"I thought it would be a pity to go to sleep and miss the singing."

"They've stopped now," she said.

"No, they haven't—listen!"

He knelt up in bed and hung on the window-sill. Celia stood beside him.

And indeed there was still a thread of sound coming from the water, faint, barely acceptable as a tune. Then gradually it died and the silence swept softly back.

"And on the lake the singing died away," Celia said.

"Yes . . . Arthur. I know . . . Can I have a drink of water?"

She pushed him back into bed, rolled him over and slapped his neat behind.

"You've been asking me for drinks of water ever since you learnt to talk."

"Well, I suppose I wasn't thirsty all then."

She went away and presently returned with a glass of lemonade. She sat on the edge of the bed while he drank it. She had not put on the light, but she could see his skinny figure in his striped pyjamas.

"Shan't get lemonade at school, I bet."

"Never mind. There'll be other things."

He handed her back the glass, from which the last drop had been skilfully tilted.

"Good night, Cillier."

He put up his face and gave her his accustomed peck, then dropped back on to the pillow. She pulled up the blanket so that it would be at hand in the night if he got cold. Then she was from the room and closed the door behind her. She went downstairs

with the empty glass in her hand and took it to the kitchen. As she rinsed it under the running tap she was overwhelmed by her own confused emotions.

She dried the glass and put it away and then stood helplessly in the kitchen trying not to weep. She had done without Edward for so long, and now she was getting old . . . She had put up with the little that Edmund seemed able to give her, telling herself that the little was enough . . . Suddenly it was all sour and stale and worthless. It was secret, and secrets have no charm when even their novelty has worn away. Mrs. Rosewarne came into the kitchen with a jug of water in her hand.

"I always forget to water indoor plants," Celia said.

"Shame on you," replied the woman, smiling none the less, her apparently grudging smile which Celia knew now held all the warmth of the world.

"Oh, my God—I'm lonely," she said.

"I'm so damn lonely."

"We're always alone, my dear," Mrs. Rosewarne answered her. "It's in ourselves to be alone but not lonely."

At this Celia decided she had had enough. She said good night and went up to bed. From her window she looked out over the dark Atlantic. She got into bed, and taking out her pocket diary, she tried to reckon how many days of Edmund's company she could hope to enjoy, until he left school in the dim, hidden future.

AFTER she had seen Edmund off to school, Celia went straight into the nearest telephone booth and rang up Robert Grandson.

"I've done as I'm bid this time, Robert. Could we meet?"

"Why didn't you give me warnings?" he exclaimed, rather crossly, she thought, considering they didn't know one another very well.

"I've got to lunch with my agent, and after that I have to meet a chap coming from abroad. I'm afraid we're doomed again."

"I don't believe we shall ever meet," Celia said.

"Oh, yes, indeed we shall! Promise to let me know next time you come to London."

Of course she promised. She left the telephone booth feeling utterly forlorn and stood for a moment wondering what to do next. Lunch with Robert Grandson would have suited her admirably. She would have been obliged to exert herself instead of moping, and she was wearing a new hat which it seemed a pity to waste. She took a bus to the West End and went and buried herself in a cinema.

When she got home that night, Celia found that the tabby cat had had her kittens in the laundry basket.

There were five kittens, in assorted shades, and instead of being angry at the location of the event, Celia could only mean to herself because Edmund was not here to see them. Until the very last moment they had hoped the kittens might arrive in time. She went downstairs and sat immediately at her desk.

Lucy Lockitt has five children, she wrote, and I think she must have remembered how you looked at the last lot before she wanted you to, otherwise she would have laid them yesterday.

Then she wondered, staring at the page, whether such childish expressions might already be taboo. After some hesitation, she converted "laid" to "had." Then she paused again, not knowing what to say next, astonished that she should find any difficulty in this the first letter she had ever written him.

She sat drawing cats and nameless flowers on the blotting paper. The house was very quiet. In the garden beyond the window at her side was all the riot of September, heavy-headed dahlias, a fuzz of Michaelmas daisies, chrysanthemums just coming into flower. A black cat was stalking a bird in a leisurely, off-hand manner across the kitchen garden. This was what Celia finally put in her first letter to Edmund, a loving picture of his home, which he had left, but which remained waiting for his return, unchanged. It was as though she tried to take these familiar things and wrap them round in his new, his frightening surroundings. When she had finished she walked to the post and then continued up the village to call at Priory Lodge.

As she went, neighbors called to her from their gardens, everyone wanted to know whether Edmund had gone willingly or unwillingly to school. When she reached the Manor, she saw Mrs. Verney cutting chrysanthemums. Celia would have passed on, but Madge Verney looked up and saw her, and called to her.

"Celia! Celia, don't run away. Tell me how it went. Any scenes?"

"Oh, no. It was all very calm."

"Giles wept. Wasn't it shaming? I didn't dare do anything about it except hand him a hanky?"

"Oh, well," Celia said, inconclusively.

"Your chrysanthemums are good this year."

"Would you like some? I'll get Diana to bring you some down in the morning."

Celia thanked her and they parted. She had wondered once or twice whether or not she would have preferred something more emotional than Edmund's manner at the station.

Though he had looked pale, he was entirely stoical. He had walked away with the young master who was looking after the new boys, and Celia saw their faces turned towards one another as they went down the platform, one gazing up, one passing down, and both trying very hard to say the right thing.

She had followed them casually, with a fellow sufferer at her side, until they reached the carriage where they were sitting, the uninitiated, the tenderfeet, in the care of the young man.

Already these little boys were halfway to a world which could never be shared by their mothers. Edmund looked out at Celia and waved and frowned rather austere. When the whistle blew the boys all crowded to the window and waved and called good-bye. Celia and the other woman walked back down the empty platform together. Of the two only Celia tried to imitate the good old British bravado of the children.

Now she went in search of the Brigadier, looking for the comfort she was not sure he would give. She expected him, however, to give her talking to; he would pronounce upon tradition, discipline, character building.

Instead he only sighed and asked if Edmund had taken a good supply of sweets and biscuits with him.

"Tuck. Very important. She never feed 'em properly in these places."

"Please!" Celia cried, not altogether laughing. "And that's sheer nonsense. I've taught in school myself. You don't think one starves the pupils?"

"Ha—girl's school. Not at all the same thing. Well, see what he says in his first letter." He snorted. "Look at Barney. Thin as a lath. School food."

"He's growing. And anyway, I came up here to be comforted."

"Have a sherry, m'dear."

Presently Celia went home alone, and the animals came round her asking for their supper, Bella and the

black cat, and Lucy Lockitt, demanding double her share.

Celia stood there looking down at the animals, filled with a great warmth for them and defensively telling herself that there was always St. Francis to excuse her sentimentality. Then she laughed a little, and went indoors. Upstairs in his room Edmund had flung down everything as he changed into his school uniform. Celia went round the room, shaking things out of their folds and then tucking them under her arm to carry to the linen box.

The socks she threw into the waste-paper basket, accepting her limitations when it came to darning. Heavens—how did they get all the darning done in a boys' school? On the bed was still the imprint of Edmund's thin body as he fell over backwards while he laced his shoes.

She stripped the blankets from the bed and put on a dust cover. She closed the windows, put away the books, scooped the colored pencils into a drawer. On the chest of drawers was a saucer with mustard and cress growing on a piece of flannel. Edmund had sown the seeds in the shape of a rather wobbly E. She picked up the saucer and went from the room.

When she got downstairs she stood for a moment aimlessly wondering what to do next. Then she went into the kitchen. She put the saucer of growing cress carefully on the window-sill. Then she turned on the oven and prepared to make biscuits to send to Edmund at school.

Across the dinner table Mary Davenport smiled at Celia and asked about the cottage, about the village, about her lecturing job—about everything but Edmund. Celia replied amiably. She made them all laugh with her descriptions of the village and village life.

On Celia's right hand Mirette Audemars, the heroine of the Resistance, picked disdainfully at her food.

The headmistress was talking about the school play for the autumn term. "I wish you'd try to come to it, Celia, my dear. And you, too, Mirette. If it should be possible."

"The last day of the term?" Celia asked.

"Yes. The twentieth. How about it?" "Why, I should simply love it," Celia said. "That's the day Edmund breaks up and he'd like to see it. We could come straight down and have lunch at the hotel."

Mirette Audemars put down her fork and folded her hands in her lap. "And who is this Edmund?" "Your sister's little boy? Oh, how is he? I've been longing to ask!"

Celia looked at Miss Clancy and smiled. "He's very well. Just finishing his first year at school. I shall be meeting his train tomorrow."

"And you already know the date of breaking up next term?" Mirette exclaimed.

"The dates came with this term's report," Celia replied, rather sharply. She had a feeling of annoyance and resentment. "Of course, Miss Clancy," she said, "Edmund was not my sister's own child. He was adopted."

"That is a brave thing," Mirette remarked. "Another woman's child! Mon Dieu!"

"It always seems so strange to me," Celia said, in a clear, rather loud voice, "that people are convinced of the reliability of their own children."

"But, ma chère Celia, consider the implications! What might the mother be?"

For a second the room vanished from Celia's sight. She saw everything

at that moment, the world spread before her, her life, Edmund's. This was the crisis towards which she had been moving ever since the meeting with Nina just two years ago.

The challenge rang and rang about the dinner table where the three other women sat with their faces turned towards her. Her vision cleared. She saw Mary's expressionless face looking straight down the table and Miss Clancy's tilted as usual by the hunch of her shoulders. Mirette had leant back in her chair. There was a completely blank look in her black eyes.

"However," Celia said, looking about her, "in this case there is no secret about the mother. So of course that makes it all right."

"My dear Mirette," said Celia, "I for my part am entirely satisfied. Because, you see, I am Edmund's mother."

She felt rather than saw the reaction round the table. She knew that she sat very straight in her chair and that she smiled at Mirette.

She knew that the Frenchwoman's bold glance wavered; she turned away and picked up her napkin from her lap, dabbing at her mouth. Her hands were trembling.

HER hands were trembling and it was that fact which brought Celia to the knowledge of absolute triumph. At the end of it all she had routed her enemy. Nothing mattered any more because in doing so she had paid all but the few last coins of her old debt. For nearly nine years she had been punished for her cowardice, but now it was over. She had brought an illegitimate child into the world, taking his father from another woman, but it was not in the technical breach that her chief fault had lain. She had tried to grab a cheating happiness without accepting her responsibilities and it just didn't work, ever.

She turned away from Mirette Audemars and pushed back her chair. "I'm afraid I've embarrassed you all. I'll go now. Mary, you must try to forgive me."

Mary Davenport made no reply. Oddly enough it was Miss Clancy who got up and left the room with Celia.

"I'll telephone for a taxi, my dear." Her poor stupid face, with its expression of hopeless humility, had flushed crimson. "I'm glad," she said. "I'm glad I envy you."

It was fine and sunny next morning as Celia stood under the glass roof of the London terminus and waited for the school train to pull in. This was the third time she had waited for Edmund to come home for the holidays, but it was the first time she had experienced quite so clear a joy of anticipation. She had one more payment to make, and although it might be a difficult one, she felt now that it would be worth more than all the rest.

Behind Celia and behind and before her, parents waited for the returning children. The eagerness on their faces was the reverse side of a coin which would have to be spun again in six weeks' time. Six weeks' the summer holidays. How clear and beautiful a time it seemed stretching away into the beginning of autumn, a time of sunshine and delight, a holiday long enough for artificial barriers to be broken down as perhaps they could not be altogether broken at Christmas and Easter.

There was a sudden stirring among the crowd at the barrier. The train sailed in like a big-bosomed matron.

The instant the wheels came to a standstill the whole side of the train seemed to break into pieces and boys tumbled on to the platform like boys out of a box. Some stood still and looked around. Some began to run towards the barrier.

Celia stood holding on to the gate, watching the stream beginning to gather speed, straining over the intervening heads to spot one boy in the welter of boys of all sizes.

She saw him suddenly, standing with another of his own age, who was greeting his mother. The strange boy flung his arms round his mother's neck and hung on, lifting his feet off the ground.

Celia stood on tiptoe and waved. She saw Edmund catch sight of her and she saw his face change from an amiable solemnity to a wide grin of excitement. He began to run, dragging his friend by the arm, hustling and pushing, punching people out of his way, red in the face with impatience. He would have bolted through the barrier if the ticket collector had not grabbed him for a moment, counting heads.

Edmund pushed the man away and ran to Celia. He stood in front of her and seemed for a moment uncertain of what he must do. This was the testing time and she knew it. The long term was behind; they had never been separated for so many weeks before.

Hesitating herself, she put out her hand, and at the same moment he flung himself into her arms. He was quite silent. When she pulled him away to look at him, his eyes were full of tears and he was laughing loudly and defiantly.

The second boy and his mother had come up behind Edmund and were waiting for the demonstration to end. When Edmund had recovered himself, there were polite introductions all round.

"This is Chudleigh," said Edmund. Chudleigh said to Celia, "This is my mother."

Edmund still had Celia by the hand. He hesitated a second. "This is mine," he said, in a hearty voice. He glanced up at Celia as though he was afraid she might let him down.

As Celia shook hands with Mrs. Chudleigh she was already wondering about explanations. But she could not be bothered to worry any more. It didn't matter.

When they had parted with Chudleigh and his mother, Celia and Edmund came out into the July sunshine and stood waiting for a taxi.

"Would you like to have lunch with Robert?" Celia asked. "He's invited us. But it's up to you."

"Yes, if you like."

"No, you must decide."

"Could we have it on the train and go straight home?"

"Yes, of course. I'll just telephone Robert and explain. He won't mind—don't look so glum."

After she had made her call, they had to go back to the end of the taxi-queue.

"Cheer," Edmund said suddenly.

"Did you mind?"

She looked down at his anxious face.

"No," she said, smiling.

"Not about Robert, I don't mean."

"I know what you mean," Celia said.

"And I didn't mind, I like it."

"Oh, good," he said, with a sigh of relief. "Then it doesn't matter if I do it again."

He put his hand through her arm and stood leaning against her until it was their turn to get into a taxi.

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